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Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4460th meeting

Tuesday, 29 January 2002, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Gayan	(Mauritius)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Guinea	Mrs. Camara
	Ireland	Ms. O'Donnell
	Mexico	Mr. Marin Bosch
	Norway	Mr. Traavik
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Baroness Amos
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation in Africa

Letter dated 10 January 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Mauritius to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/46)

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02-23357 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Africa

Letter dated 10 January 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Mauritius to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/46)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Algeria, Angola, Bangladesh, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Spain, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine and Zambia in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion on the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Messahel (Algeria), Mr. Chikoti (Angola), Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh), Mr. Duval (Canada), Mr. Djagone-Bi (Côte d'Ivoire), Mr. Rodriguez Parrilla (Cuba), Mr. She Okitundu (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Mr. Olhaye (Djibouti), Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt), Mr. Effah-Apenteng (Ghana), Mr. Sharma (India), Miss Durrant (Jamaica), Mr. Motomura (Japan), Mr. Jalang'o (Kenya), Mr. Dorda (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia), Mr. Fassi Fihri (Morocco), Ms. Velho Rodrigues (Mozambique), Mr. Apata (Nigeria), Mr. Gadio (Senegal), Mr. Kamara (Sierra Leone), Ms. Mabudafhasi (South Africa), Mr. Arias (Spain), Mr. Mejdoub (Tunisia), Mr. Semakula Kiwanuka (Uganda), Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine) and Mr. Kalumba (Zambia) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I wish to extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Abdelkader Messahel, Minister in Charge of African Affairs of Algeria; His Excellency Mr. Georges Chikoti, Vice-Minister for External Relations of Angola; His Excellency Mr. Léonard She Okitundu, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; His Excellency Mr. Tayb Fassi Fihri, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Morocco; Her Excellency Ms. Frances Velho Rodrigues, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Mozambique; His Excellency Mr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio, Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Union and Senegalese Abroad of Senegal; Her Excellency Ms. R. T. Mabudafhasi, Minister for Environmental Affairs and Tourism of South Africa; and His Excellency Mr. Katele Kalumba, the new Minister for Foreign Affairs of Zambia.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council, and on behalf of the Security Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Amara Essy, Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU)/ African Union, and invite him to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Ivan Šimonović, President of the Economic and Social Council. I understand that he is not yet here in the Chamber, but he will take his seat when he comes.

The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on its agenda — namely, the situation in Africa. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations. I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/2002/46, which contains the guidelines for this meeting.

I now wish to welcome the Deputy Secretary-General, Her Excellency Ms. Louise Fréchette, to this meeting and invite her to take the floor.

Ms. Fréchette: Mr. President, let me begin by welcoming you to this house and thanking you for all that your country does, both for the United Nations and for Africa. As a stable multiparty democracy with a

rapidly growing economy, Mauritius is one of Africa's most striking success stories. Your example should encourage and inspire all Africans as they seek to implement the New Partnership for Africa's Development, with its commendable emphasis on human rights, the rule of law, and African self-help.

Let me also welcome the new Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), who has the daunting responsibility of overseeing its transformation into the African Union. We all hope that this change will be reflected in a transformation of the continent's fortunes, and we look forward to an ever closer and more effective partnership between our two organizations.

Our own Secretary-General much regrets that he cannot be here today. He welcomes the Council's sustained focus on Africa, which still occupies on average 60 per cent of its time, at a moment when many people's attention is focused elsewhere.

I should also thank you, Mr. President, for the very useful set of guidelines for this meeting that your Permanent Representative circulated earlier in the month. The clear and comprehensive list of questions it contains should help to focus all our minds.

In my own statement, I shall concentrate on just a few of those questions, without attempting to revisit all the deep-rooted causes of conflict in Africa. These were amply covered in the Secretary-General's report of April 1998 and in subsequent reports, as well as in resolutions of this Council and of the General Assembly. Some of them, indeed, fall outside the agenda of this Council. They should, of course, be tackled as a matter of great urgency but in the context of other forums, such as the forthcoming world conferences on financing for development and on sustainable development.

But I must at least mention HIV/AIDS, if only because it is now the greatest single threat to Africa's social and economic development and is a factor that contributes to most, if not all, of those deep-rooted causes of conflict. The whole United Nations system is engaged, alongside the peoples of Africa, in the struggle against this terrible scourge, and this is certainly not the moment to relax our efforts.

But today, I suggest that we can most usefully focus on issues where this Council has direct responsibilities and possibilities for action, and particularly that we should take advantage of Mr. Essy's presence to concentrate on building a stronger relationship between the United Nations, the OAU and the subregional organizations that are such an encouraging feature of the African landscape.

In this context, one asks whether the United Nations has played its role in supporting regional initiatives, especially when this Council's authorization is required for peacekeeping operations. The answer, in our opinion, is that consultation and cooperation between the United Nations and the various African regional arrangements have increased considerably in recent years, especially in West Africa and the Great Lakes. With the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in particular, the United Nations has worked closely on security issues in the Mano River Basin. High-level delegations from both subregions have come here for consultations, while the Council has also sent its own fact-finding missions to Africa.

As far as the OAU is concerned, there have been regular meetings between our secretariats, both at the top and at the level of experts. But these contacts could definitely be strengthened further. In particular, we need to step up our cooperation with the political mechanisms that some of the subregional organizations have created, so that we can work with them in developing integrated approaches to conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peace-building. Such approaches must involve cooperation, not only in the areas of politics and security, but also across a wide range of issues, such as human rights, humanitarian relief, the struggle against HIV/AIDS, and economic and social development.

I hope that the establishment of the United Nations Office in West Africa and the proposed international conference on the Great Lakes will in their different ways help improve institutional links and so build confidence among the countries of those two subregions as they seek to promote such integrated policies.

But let us not delude ourselves. None of this will get very far unless there is real political will — both on the part of African leaders to pursue the quest for peace, and on the part of members of this Council to act decisively in their support for Africa.

It is also vital that we help our African partners to strengthen their own logistical capacities, especially in the area of peacekeeping. The OAU, subregional

organizations and many individual African States have shown a commendable interest in assuming a bigger role in peacekeeping in Africa, but at present their capacity to do so is severely restricted by lack of training and resources, especially shortages of equipment and of the basic supplies that any unit needs to sustain itself in a theatre of operations. It is therefore essential that the international community make a more serious and concerted effort to build up and sustain these regional capacities.

The United Nations is already facilitating contacts between African contributors to United Nations operations, on the one hand, and donor States that can provide logistical and equipment stocks, on the other, and we would be happy to do more in this vital area. We have also been working with the OAU and the subregional actors, through information-sharing, training and staff exchange, to improve their capacity for supporting peace operations. I might mention in particular the inter-agency mission which visited West Africa in March last year and made several recommendations for improving the capacity of ECOWAS.

Similar considerations apply to the recovery programmes of post-conflict societies. Your guidelines, Mr. President, rightly identify the effective implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes as a vital component of post-conflict peace-building. Indeed, too many peace processes in Africa have been broken because this crucial aspect — and particularly the reintegration component — was either neglected or not sustained. In current and future cases, it must be placed on a solid, long-term financial footing.

Other closely related aspects, and similarly crucial, are national reconciliation and accountability for atrocities. These two processes are so important to the success of our missions that I suggest the Council might wish in future to include them in United Nations mandates and to recommend that their funding be put on a more solid basis.

In the specific case of Sierra Leone, the Secretary-General has shown great faith in the political will and commitment of Member States by agreeing to establish the Special Court mandated by this Council in spite of a shortfall in funds so far pledged of $1.4 million for the first year and $7.4 million for subsequent years. It is yet to be determined whether this is a satisfactory model for financing institutions of accountability in conflicts elsewhere on the continent and, indeed, beyond it.

Your questionnaire, Sir, asks how effective sanctions imposed by the Council have been and to what extent they have served their purpose as preventive or coercive measures in African conflicts. Most of them, as you know, have centred on arms embargoes. Their effectiveness has been limited by various factors, including insufficient political support, porous and unpoliced borders, inadequate infrastructure, lack of resources for monitoring and implementation, and — once again — inadequate regional or subregional capacities.

But progress has certainly been made since the Council has taken to establishing panels of experts to investigate violations. These bodies have been able to identify criminal networks involved in sanctions-busting and have developed far-reaching, practical proposals for monitoring. In both Sierra Leone and Angola, illicit sales of diamonds and other national resources have been made more difficult and this has significantly diminished the ability of armed groups to defy the will of the international community, as expressed by this Council.

In its response to the events of 11 September 2001, the international community has shown a new unity and determination in dealing with those who seek to use commercial and financial transactions for illegal and violent ends; and, in resolution 1373 (2001), this Council has found a new and promising mechanism for ensuring compliance with its decisions. I hope the Council will now use this new-found political momentum, and perhaps invoke a similar mechanism, to reinforce its call on Member States to make the violation of arms embargoes that it has imposed a criminal offence under their national laws.

Resolution 1373 (2001) also notes the close connection between international terrorism and transnational organized crime, illicit drugs, money-laundering and illegal arms trafficking. All of these activities play their parts in conflicts in Africa and I hope the connection may lead the Council to focus more attention on illicit traffickers.

More broadly, the events of 11 September reminded us all of the danger to international order that can arise when structures of governance anywhere break down and a State or region becomes a zone of anarchy and refuge for outlaws. Since the risk of this

happening is as great in Africa as anywhere, it would be doubly wrong to allow these events to distract us from Africa's problems. On the contrary, this Council has stronger reasons than ever to consider what it can do to strengthen State structures and encourage effective, accountable government in that part of the world.

I make no claim to have given a comprehensive list of all the actions needed to remove the causes of conflict in Africa, let alone to promote durable peace and sustainable development. As I said at the outset, many of those actions lie well outside the purview of this Council, but I believe I have mentioned a number of points where the Council can usefully take action.

My colleagues and I will listen with close attention to the comments and suggestions that will be made in the course of these discussions. Rest assured that we are ready and eager to help implement the workable set of recommendations which I hope will indeed emerge.

The President: I thank the Deputy Secretary-General for her kind words addressed to me, my staff and my country.

I should now like to invite the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity/African Union, Mr. Amara Essy, to take the floor.

Mr. Essy (*spoke in French*): I am very moved to be in this Chamber again, where I have felt much joy and emotion in the past, given all the crises that we have had to address here.

At the outset, I am very pleased, on my own behalf and on behalf of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), sincerely to congratulate the Republic of Mauritius on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. Through Mauritius, the entire continent of Africa is honoured and recognized as one of the main actors in international relations today.

Addressing the other African members of the Council, Cameroon and Guinea, I wish to pay tribute to their commitment to Africa and to the international community as a whole and to their efforts to promote international peace and security. I also thank the Permanent Representatives of the outgoing African members, Mali and Tunisia. Finally, I pay tribute to all members of the Council, entrusted by the international community to discharge the noble mission assigned to them by the Charter. I congratulate them on their work on behalf of peace and stability throughout the world and particularly in Africa. As it is early in the year, I extend to them my best wishes for a pleasant and happy year.

The United Nations, and particularly the Security Council, have adopted the custom of regularly inviting the Organization of African Unity to address them on the situation in Africa. Such exchanges offer us an excellent opportunity to share the hopes and fears of a continent that, despite its apparent marginalization, continues to believe deeply in the ideals of the 1945 Charter. It is also an opportunity to exchange with all the members of the Council certain reflections on the crucial issues and on ways of overcoming the difficulties encountered by some of our African States. Thus, today's meeting itself will reveal the interest and the attention that the Council and, through it, the United Nations and its Secretary-General have devoted to the future of our continent.

The recent decisions taken by the Council, particularly with regard to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, also indicate the resolute commitment of the Council, which cannot be separated from the unceasing efforts, day after day, of my friend Kofi Annan to secure a better future for Africa.

At the top of our concerns are the problems in achieving peace and security and the conflict situations that unfortunately continue to characterize the African continent. This situation intervenes at a very particular international juncture, following the events of 11 September 2001, which have made the world aware more than ever that security issues are a vital concern, not only for certain countries and peoples, but also for the entire international community. This context lends even more significance to our meeting and also allows the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to insist on the part the continental organization intends to play in strengthening the instruments to combat terrorism and, in a more general way, to promote peace and security in the world.

From this point of view, the contribution of the OAU is a natural result of the partnership it has established with the United Nations over the years. Without a doubt, Africa is aware that it needs to work together with the United Nations and other international, regional and subregional organizations to seek ways and means of strengthening peace in the world. To that end, many concrete actions to prevent, manage and settle conflicts have been carried out, and

these have often resulted in solutions to preserve the peace.

Without failing to recognize the many political and financial constraints, among others, that interfere with the functioning of the mechanism adopted by our continent in 1993, that mechanism, without a doubt, has nevertheless been extremely useful in reconciling institutional and programmatic approaches. The ongoing reform of the structures, working methods and procedures of the central organ gives us an opportunity to improve performance and learn from experience.

If, at the continental level, the fact that the OAU has undertaken work on conflict situations permits in many respects a certain optimism, yet at the international level there is a certain scepticism, which is a cause of concern for us. The globalization currently under way, and the profound technological changes that accompany it, illustrate clearly some of the handicaps Africa suffers from and highlight our fear of seeing our continent disconnected from the movement that is fashioning international relations and their current evolution. If no serious thought is given to improving the situation and allowing Africa to truly become part of the new international trade system, the marginalization of our continent could be seriously detrimental to its stability, security and development.

As I have said, today's meeting is taking place at a very critical time, when conflict situations, particularly on the African continent, are characterized not only by their increasing number, but also by their complexity and the multiple internal, regional and international dimensions that they encompass. If there has been a significant drop in the number of inter-State conflicts in Africa, this development has been offset by the appearance of internal conflicts, for which the settlement mechanisms of the United Nations and the OAU do not always seem adequate.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations has often reiterated that the problems of international security — and the situation in Africa is one of the chief concerns — arise in a context different from that of 1945, when the Charter was adopted. From now on, it is not so much the security of States that is at stake, but the very existence of the State as an organized system of government. Today, there is as much need to guarantee the collective security of States as provided for under the Charter of the United Nations and increasingly taken over by regional and subregional organizations as there is need to ensure the global security of societies beset by civil war or other threats like organized crime and major pandemics like HIV/AIDS. The wars that continue to tear Africa apart often lead to both economic and social disaster. It is out of recognition of this that greater cooperation has developed between the OAU and the United Nations, and Kofi Annan has been personally involved in this area. His 1998 report was indeed a watershed, among other things, in its focus on the causes of conflict in Africa, and it attracted the attention of many Security Council members to the necessity of investing in the settlement of conflicts.

Common cultural, geographic and historical factors are determining factors in conflict settlement. Our approach must consist in identifying them and using them to promote the means of conflict settlement. In the case of partnership with the United Nations, regional organizations and the OAU are increasingly sought after. Their proximity to hotspots and wars undoubtedly helps them identify more easily the causes of conflicts and the actors involved. This proximity also gives them the advantage of being able to anticipate the reaching of an agreement that is likely to end a crisis. That being said, this same proximity can also generate tensions and make certain situations more complex, in particular when neighbouring countries do not feel the obligation to remain impartial and become parties to the conflict.

However, the challenge of security is that it requires the input and contribution of everyone. Therefore, we continue to advocate the strengthening of the partnership between the OAU and the United Nations. This must also extend to subregional African organizations, which have demonstrated their real commitment and availability to help in conflict management directed by our continental organization. Mme. Fréchette has touched on this subject. The modalities of the partnership must be further refined, however, so that efforts at the subregional, continental and global levels are consistently harmonized and coordinated.

In this spirit, I remain deeply convinced that in order to ensure an effective partnership, the United Nations must intensify cooperation with continental and subregional organizations, which are the very foundation of and key partners in any global approach to conflict settlement on the continent.

Following on from this policy of partnership and cooperation that we are trying to define and build together, I would like to recall and emphasize the position of the OAU between the United Nations and subregional organizations in the maintenance of peace and security in Africa. Thus, the OAU and, even more, the African Union, plays a key role in promoting and coordinating activities deployed by regional entities. As we are considering ways and means to strengthen this cooperation, I would suggest a mechanism for consultations between the Security Council and the central organ of the OAU mechanism on conflict resolution.

In this context, I would like to emphasize — not without pride and satisfaction — the spirit of collaboration, cooperation and coordination that inspired the efforts of the OAU, the United Nations, the European Union and other partners in their search for a solution to the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. This exemplary coordination, based on a collective approach and a common vision of the means of conflict settlement, was very helpful in finding an effective solution and should, you will agree, be seriously considered as a model for addressing other conflicts, especially on the African continent.

The partnership between the OAU and the United Nations must also ensure the necessary coordination of peace initiatives in Africa. If the increasing number of such initiatives reflects the commitment of African countries to peace, they still need to be coordinated more effectively. As for the role of the United Nations, I would emphasize the Council's primary role in the maintenance of international peace and security. The success of this partnership, which we all wish for, depends fundamentally on the will and ability of the Council to act as the guarantor of international peace and security. It depends largely on the commitment of the United Nations to work side by side with the OAU and subregional African organizations.

In emphasizing the paramount responsibility of the Security Council, we must remember that Africa remains determined to shoulder the responsibilities that are its own. It is the most interested party that must address the crises prevailing on the continent. Because of this fact, the OAU has for some years been trying to assume its full share of responsibility. It has also been very dynamic in conflict prevention, management and resolution. Its efforts to find a solution to the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea met with outstanding success in the Algiers Agreements. Its firm commitment, since 1997, to stand by the Comoros parties in their efforts to reach reconciliation and restore constitutional order seems to be bearing fruit.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi and Sierra Leone, the OAU has made a key contribution to the efforts towards peace that have been deployed jointly with the United Nations and the relevant subregional organizations.

The OAU must play a more active role in the area of conflict prevention, management and resolution. In this context, we must endeavour to enhance the effectiveness of the OAU mechanism, as called for by the OAU Summit in Lusaka.

All of these efforts and initiatives in the area of peace and security can have a genuine impact on stability in Africa only if they are accompanied by stronger and more determined support on the part of the international community, with a view to helping Africa to take up the many tremendous challenges facing it in the socio-economic field and as concerns development in general.

I should like to take this opportunity to speak about the OAU's transition to the African Union and the New African Initiative, which has been renamed the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

As is well known, the Constitutive Act of the African Union entered into force on 26 May 2001, following its ratification by more than two thirds of the member States of the OAU. At the Lusaka Summit in June 2001, at which I was appointed to head the organization, the African leaders charged me with the important mission of ensuring the transition from the OAU to the African Union and with setting up its principal organs — the Assembly, the Council, the Commission and the ambassadorial Committee charged with translating this reform into reality.

Seeking transparency and wishing to promote trust, I immediately began to consult with political leaders and OAU staff with a view to implementing the Lusaka decision and to achieving this lofty mission. Those consultations included representatives of the member States of the OAU at Addis Ababa and some of OAU's external partners, for example, the European Union, which we consider to be a model of economic integration.

Those consultations, which were followed by seminars on these issues, allowed for an overall view of the structure of the African Union, its various bodies and their respective responsibilities. Draft texts on all of these organs, their spheres of competence and their methods of work are now being finalized. Last week in Addis Ababa a meeting of ambassadors and African experts was convened to consider those texts, which were drawn up by the secretariat.

Further meetings are also scheduled. For instance, from 3 to 8 March, jointly with the Economic Commission for Africa, we will be holding the Third African Development Forum, under the theme "Defining priorities for regional integration". Thousands will attend: highly placed officials, ambassadors, ministers, parliamentarians, trade unionists, students, women's groups and top African experts on integration-related matters. In other words, we are making every effort to make the Union into a reality.

I have also signed an agreement with the United Nations Development Programme to provide logistical backup to our secretariat in the transition process.

We are not carrying out this task in isolation; we are trying to involve all interested parties — not only African ones, but also all examples of integration, such as the Southern Common Market and the Association of South-East Asian Nations, in order to profit from their experience during this transition.

All of this leads us to the South African summit on the proclamation of the African Union — a proclamation that is set to take place in June 2002 in South Africa. To succeed in its mission, the OAU will spare no effort to earn the trust of its member States to ensure cooperation, transparency and confidence among all actors as we proceed with this institutional transformation. We want to work in the spirit of African unity, which is so dear to all Africans.

African unity is not something that is accomplished by just one head of State, or even a few, but a long-standing dream that Africa has been trying to realize for a very, very long time — since the 1800s, with DuBois, Padmore, Nkruma and Nyerere.

For us, and for the African heads of State and Government, the African Union must not become OAU, part two. This is not a simple name change. We want it to reflect a renewed aspiration to integration on the part of African States and genuine progress towards African unity. It must have strong organs, including a commission that must be the driving force behind the Union and reflect the common and individual interests of the entire membership and their desire to build a Union that lives up to the hopes placed in it by the peoples of Africa.

The Council will also be aware of the developments that took place in 2001 with respect to the launching of the New Initiative aimed at setting up a new global partnership between Africa and the developed world. Now called the New Partnership for Africa's Development, it is aimed at laying the foundation for a new partnership between Africa and the developed countries on the basis of mutual interests and common concerns.

It is aimed also at strengthening democracy and sound economic management in the continent. The goal is for Africa to become an active partner in the new world economy, so that it will not be marginalized. The initiative aims to ensure the renewal of Africa and to promote development, while reiterating that this task is the responsibility of the African Governments and peoples themselves. They must create a political, economic and social environment conducive to ensuring the structural transformations that are required for people-centred development.

I would like to stress that the initiative, submitted to the General Assembly last September, exists within the context of the African Union. Of course, it was initiated by heads of State, but at Lusaka we decided to integrate it into the framework of the African Union. Last week, in South Africa, I attended a seminar on NEPAD, how the OAU is becoming the African Union, and how NEPAD will be integrated into the African Union.

In the document that we elaborated jointly with UNDP, a working group was created whose single goal is to focus on integrating NEPAD into the African Union. So there is no dichotomy, no competition. There is only one organization, and that is the African Union. NEPAD deserves active support from our other development partners, including, in particular, the agencies of the United Nations system.

I cannot end my statement without expressing my deep appreciation for the tremendous contribution made by the Security Council in the context of its growing role in the resolution of conflicts in Africa. I wish the Council every success in the lofty task with which it has been charged by the international community.

In a fast-moving world characterized by rapid and profound upheavals, there is great potential for confusion. That is why the Council will remain the light that is guiding us in our march forward towards realizing the ideals of peace, security and development of humanity as a whole. In this lofty task, the OAU will always be at its side in trying to build a world of peace and justice.

Africa, through the OAU today and the African Union tomorrow, will unflinchingly and unfailingly work as a full partner in the context of these efforts towards peace, justice and development, which we all so ardently yearn for.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity for his important statement and for the kind words he addressed to me and to my country.

I now have the pleasure to call on the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Baroness Valerie Amos.

Baroness Amos (United Kingdom): May I first express my appreciation to the presidency of the Government of Mauritius and in particular to you, Sir, for the initiative and effort which has been put into organizing this Security Council debate on conflict in Africa.

We need such debates in order to maintain the focus of the world's attention on African conflicts, even amid other fast-moving events, and to keep pressing for better solutions to a very grave problem. This is the second consecutive African presidency of the Council, and we welcome the hard work that both Mali and Mauritius have done in keeping the issue of conflict in Africa high on the international agenda, where, unfortunately, it needs to be.

I say "unfortunately" because violent conflict in Africa is bad for Africa and bad for the world. Not only is it one of the main obstacles to reducing poverty, upholding human rights and achieving sustainable development in Africa; it is also a threat to global security. Why? Because armed conflict in Africa has led to large-scale displacement of people and environmental degradation and provides opportunities for international criminal and terrorist activities. Conflict in Africa has the potential to affect all of us. It is therefore one of the major challenges of international relations in our time and a special challenge for the Security Council.

The scope of political violence in Africa is breathtaking. Armed conflicts in Angola, the Sudan and Somalia, where numerous peacekeeping and peacemaking efforts have failed, are now all but ignored. In those war-ravaged nations millions have been condemned to despair and misery. In the Great Lakes region, a dozen African nations have in one way or another been sucked into a series of interlocking conflicts since the mid-1990s. And there are many other countries affected by or at risk of violent conflict.

But there are some positive signs. Thanks in large measure to the work of the Security Council and the United Nations Secretariat, progress has been made in the past 18 months in restoring peace and security to Sierra Leone, where the United Kingdom has also played a major role. Hostilities between Ethiopia and Eritrea, which claimed the lives of many thousands, have also been brought to a close. And there are serious efforts under way, involving regional States and the United Nations, to tackle the biggest challenge of all — the conflicts in the Great Lakes region.

The United Kingdom welcomes this progress and salutes the men and women who have made it possible, particularly those United Nations peacekeepers who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the pursuit of peace and security in Africa. Much of this progress has been made possible by the willingness of the Security Council to learn from the failures of earlier peacekeeping efforts.

The report of the United Nations Panel on Peace Operations — the Brahimi report — is a valuable synthesis of those lessons learned. Its far-reaching recommendations are a road map for reform of the way the United Nations goes about the complex task of tackling conflict in Africa and elsewhere. We welcome and support the current programme of implementation of the Brahimi report recommendations.

We do indeed need new approaches in order to deal with the changing and diverse nature of violent conflict in Africa. Classic peacekeeping doctrine and conflict diplomacy have been shown to be ineffective tools in dealing with the asymmetric and increasingly regional conflicts that have emerged around collapsed and failed States, where distinctions between State and non-State actors have become blurred.

In many African societies, national and regional conflict has become the "normal" state of affairs. Complex and abusive political economies, which often hide behind the outward symbols of statehood and national sovereignty, have grown up around conflict, feeding off it and fuelling it. Regional and international rivalries have tended to exacerbate and prolong violence.

The challenge therefore for the Security Council and the wider international system is not just to prevent or end hostilities in conflict zones. It is far greater than that. We need to help transform regional and national political economies that are conditioned by violent conflict into healthy systems based on political participation, social and economic inclusion, respect for human rights and the rule of law.

The task is a big one. It requires political commitment to provide the necessary human and financial resources to do the job. It requires refinement and adaptation of the instruments and mechanisms at our disposal. It requires precise coordination of the work of the many different actors and organizations involved, African and non-African, within and outside of the United Nations system.

One area where we feel more progress could be made in this respect is in increasing the conflict prevention capacity of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), or African Union, and of African subregional organizations, like the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). This is partly a question of strengthening these organizations' ability to engage effectively in conflict analysis and early warning, conflict mediation, monitoring and verification of ceasefires and, in some cases, regional peace support operations. But it is also a question of deepening effective cooperation on conflict issues between these organizations and the United Nations through more regular consultations, information-sharing and joint projects. For this reason, we welcome the Mauritian proposal to establish a working group to look at new ways of improving relations between the United Nations and the OAU.

A Security Council working group tasked with finding imaginative solutions to the problem of conflict in Africa could have real added value. As we see it, such a group would have a special emphasis on improving and deepening the Security Council's relations with the OAU, ECOWAS, SADC and perhaps other subregional organizations. But it needs to have a clear mandate designed to produce concrete and deliverable outcomes within a specific time frame. In the first instance, we would like to see such a working group work with the OAU and Africa's subregional bodies to strengthen their conflict prevention capacity and enhance cooperation between them and the United Nations. I know that Mr. Amara Essy, the OAU Secretary-General, will have these points very much in mind as part of the current restructuring of the organization.

Involvement of African regional organizations is one way of encouraging African ownership of conflict solutions, a concept that underlies the recently launched New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

In response to NEPAD, G-8 leaders last year commissioned a G-8 Africa action plan. They also nominated special representatives — I am the representative for the United Kingdom — to draw up the plan in time for the next G-8 Summit in Canada, later this year.

How can we use the G-8 Africa dialogue to promote conflict prevention and resolution in Africa? We see the dialogue as an opportunity to underline that both the richer nations of the world and Africans have important responsibilities.

On the one hand, we hope to use the dialogue to encourage African nations to tackle the indigenous causes of conflict in Africa, such as political, economic and social exclusion, poor governance, corruption, and so on.

On the other hand, the G-8 can help Africa achieve these goals by tackling some of the causes and drivers of conflict that lie in the international sphere, such as the unfavourable terms of economic exchange between Africa and the West, the export of small arms and light weapons to conflict-prone regions and the exploitation of economic resources by external actors. We also need to use the dialogue to mobilize resources and commitment to improving United Nations conflict management systems.

As I said earlier, it is very useful that the Council has had an opportunity over the last two months to take a sustained look at its work on Africa, both the individual conflicts and the generic issues. The next

African presidency of the Council will not be for some time, but I would like to announce that the United Kingdom will use its presidency in July to give a further African focus to the Council's work. One possibility is a meeting devoted to African issues as a whole, which could include a review of the work we are starting today.

Violent conflict in Africa is our joint failure. Africa is already living with the consequences of this failure. Violent conflict not only breeds suffering and misery, it also breeds further violent conflict. The cycle, once entrenched, is hard to break.

However, I believe that Africans, their international partners and the United Nations have it in their power to build strong African nations and regions by resolving political differences and conflicts through peaceful and inclusive processes. That requires that political leaders and international diplomats recognize that conflict prevention is ultimately about the establishment of tolerant, democratic and inclusive political systems. We have learned the lessons of conflict in Africa; let us now apply them with courage and determination.

The President: I thank the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for the kind words she addressed to me and to my country.

Ms. O'Donnell (Ireland): May I first thank Mauritius, as President of the Security Council this month, for arranging today's meeting on the situation in Africa: thank you, Mr. Minister, for presiding over our deliberations today. I warmly welcome the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Mr. Amara Essy, to our meeting. In this debate, the High Representative of the European Union, Mr. Javier Solana, will also speak, and we look forward to his statement.

The situation in Africa is a panorama of daunting challenges. It is also one of real hope. Across Africa new windows of opportunity are opening. No one can fail to be inspired by the honesty and clarity of vision of the New Partnership for Africa's Development as outlined by Mr. Essy just now. The wider international community, for its part, must fully meet its commitments by helping African Governments and the people of Africa to shape new horizons and grasp new opportunities.

Over recent decades, wars have devastated much of Africa. The Secretary-General rightly observed only a few years ago that

> "By not averting these colossal human tragedies, African leaders have failed the peoples of Africa; the international community has failed them; the United Nations has failed them." (*S/1998/318, para. 5*)

But today that sense of past failure is, fortunately, being replaced by a new determination and a sense of new beginnings. Democracy is spreading across the continent of Africa, supported by the OAU, soon to become the African Union, which is strongly committed to addressing the causes of conflict and to working actively for the prevention of conflict.

Today, in the Horn of Africa, in West Africa and in the Great Lakes region, the United Nations is involved, in ways large and small, in conflict prevention, in peacekeeping and in peacemaking. Every month, African issues strongly feature on the agenda of the Security Council. Almost every month, the complexity of each situation is considered in terms of its own unique features. What we can say, and what was not true even a few years ago, is that the United Nations is now at work, actively and strongly, in peacekeeping, peacemaking and peace-building across virtually all regions of Africa. And that is as it should be.

At the same time, Africa must lead the way and play its part. Good governance must mean exactly that: elections must be fully fair and transparent; the resources of Africa must be used for the people of Africa and not for the gain of a few.

The best way forward for Africa can be only by two parallel paths. Both require the full support of the international community. The first is the path of conflict resolution and the prevention of new conflict situations, and the second, crucially, is the path of advancing economic and social development and achieving greater integration of Africa into the world economy. These are related objectives of peace and development. Progress in each depends on the other. On these interlocking paths rests the future well-being of the peoples of Africa.

Allow me to offer some views, as Ireland sees it, on conflict prevention and conflict resolution in Africa. We have all grappled with these issues long and hard

over recent years. African leaders have also done so; we in the United Nations have done so; the European Union and our partners in Africa have done so. But where are we now? Where do we now stand on this issue of conflict resolution?

First, we have come a long way, but we need to strengthen coordination and cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU and African regional organizations; between all United Nations institutions active on the ground and the Security Council; between civil society players in conflict or potential conflict situations in Africa and all others involved in mediation or support efforts.

Ireland attaches special importance to the role of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in addressing conflicts in Africa. Ireland would like to see greater and more structured dialogue between the OAU and its structures on the one hand, and the United Nations, especially the Security Council, on the other. This should relate, in the main, to practical issues so that we all share the same information and have the opportunity to assess together how best to proceed in tackling potential conflict situations. Likewise, Ireland would like to see an established, structured dialogue between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

The Security Council and the Economic and Social Council have clear, separate but complementary roles. We need to ensure that our actions are coherent and that there is a bridge of a shared approach and operational coordination in the Security Council's roles in peace and security and in related development issues that are the charter domain of the Economic and Social Council.

The Secretary-General and the United Nations family of institutions perform their roles with great resolve and absolute commitment. A few years ago, many of us complained of a lack of internal coordination and of coordination among many United Nations bodies, but much progress has since been made in that area. However, the policy-making institutions of the United Nations belonging to Member States have yet to achieve coordination in the same way.

Secondly, we need to look in a fresh way at all the instruments at our disposal in addressing potential or actual conflict situations in Africa. Have the contributions of United Nations special mediators or special commissions been of help? In the view of Ireland, the answer is an absolute "yes". United Nations mediators and special representative have played a role of exceptional value in recent years in the Horn of Africa, in the Central African Republic, in the Great Lakes region and across the continent. We in the European Union take much pride in our own work in this area and in our conflict resolution strategies in Africa, including through the process of dialogue with our partners in the Cotonou framework.

In his guidelines for this meeting, the President asks whether subregional organizations in Africa are useful and successful in building and maintaining peace. Of course they are: the Lusaka and the Arusha peace processes powerfully demonstrate what can be achieved by regional peace initiatives. The international community must continue, however, to support such initiatives; the leadership must come from Africa.

How can we in the wider international community, including the United Nations, best support subregional organizations and, of course, the work of the OAU? We certainly need greater dialogue and coordination, and how to best achieve that — for example, through early warning actions to tackle potential conflict situations — is something we need to carefully assess. Ireland sees much value in African regional and subregional organizations appointing special envoys where appropriate, and facilitating the establishment of councils of elders that could help mediate disputes and promote practical solutions.

Can we in the international community help strengthen Africa's peacemaking capacity? Clearly, we have an explicit obligation to do so.

Are sanctions and embargoes an important instrument for the United Nations, the OAU and regional organizations? In Ireland's view, they have a critical role to play and, as in Angola and Liberia, have proved essential. They are, however, often a blunt instrument, and we need to carefully weigh the humanitarian consequences.

Equally, tackling the illicit flow of small arms is of the utmost importance, just as demobilization, repatriation and reintegration programmes are another central dimension in resolving conflict situations.

As a third and final point on the issue of conflict prevention and resolution, let me note that efforts to prevent conflict in Africa must not only recognize the

question of resources — which is all too often the source of intra-State conflict — but also promote a broad range of human rights, including civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights and the right to development itself. Equally, empowered women must be a core dimension of meaningful conflict prevention strategies.

Looking at Africa today and at the role of African leaders and of the United Nations, I think we here, all of us, can take pride in having turned back — albeit sometimes slowly — forces of violence or division; but also in having supported forces of peace in many African regions: in Sierra Leone, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the wider Great Lakes region. In Burundi, the formation of the new transitional Government is powerful witness to the positive engagement of neighbouring countries.

In Somalia, the establishment of the Transitional National Government offers a path to a new beginning for that tragic and tortured country. The United Nations must soon decide on its own future role in supporting the forces of peace in Somalia; that is something that Ireland will strongly advocate. The countries of the region must also work together to support peace in Somalia. The people of Somalia deserve our active support and engagement.

The peoples of Africa are entitled to look to the international community for our fulsome involvement in helping them to meet the myriad challenges of development on their continent. Without economic and social development in Africa, I believe, all other policies will ultimately prove to have been built on sand.

African leaders themselves have indicated the way forward in the New Partnership for Africa's Development — a vision of development that is wise, generous and right. This vision requires the promotion of democracy, good governance, sound macroeconomic policies, transparent legal and regulatory frameworks and the advancement of the role of women. It requires, essentially, African-owned and African-led development programmes.

In order for this type of development to be achieved, the international community will be required to fully fulfil its commitments to support capacity-building in Africa, as agreed at the World Trade Organization meeting in Doha. This means sustained investment in education in Africa and in the building of social capital as one of the keys to unlock the human potential of Africans in all their diversity. It means a new trade framework that addresses the present exclusion — and that is the right word for it — of Africa from the globalized economy. It means a successful outcome to the International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Monterrey a few weeks from now. It means full international support in helping to turn back the scourge of AIDS in Africa.

In summary, what is required is decisive action by the international community on development financing, on trade opportunities, in encouraging inward investment and in debt relief through the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative and other initiatives. It means setting ourselves the unwavering objective of fully achieving in Africa the 2015 international development goals. We know that these things do not happen by chance. These things will not happen without ethical political leadership from developed countries. Ireland will play its part in working to advance these objectives. The Irish Government has committed itself to achieving the goal of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) by the end of 2007. This year, we will meet our interim target of 0.45 per cent of GNP.

There is no single easy formula to meet all the many challenges facing Africa. What we can say is that these challenges have no chance whatever of being met without cooperation and, above all, without the absolute determination of all of us: African leaders, African civil society, we in the Security Council and the United Nations as a whole and the wider international community. Today's meeting of the Council is another important event in a journey increasingly marked by real hope for Africa and its wonderful people.

I am glad that the United Kingdom has indicated that it will again focus on Africa during its presidency of the Council.

The President: I thank the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Ireland for her kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Traavik (Norway): First of all, I would like to commend the delegation of Mauritius and you, personally, Mr. President, for having organized this debate on the situation in Africa. Let me also warmly welcome the Secretary-General of the Organization of

African Unity (OAU), Mr. Amara Essy, at today's meeting.

Norway sincerely hopes that the views expressed and the ideas presented during this open debate will contribute to a better understanding of the issues at hand and to a more coherent approach on the part of the Council in its response to African conflicts.

The conflicts have caused, and are causing, appalling human suffering and misery. Millions of people have lost their lives or been injured, and countless civilians have been uprooted from their homes or separated from their families. This terrible human toll is the backdrop to our debate on the situation in Africa, and we must never forget that.

Neither must we forget that armed conflicts have a devastating effect on economies and the development efforts of the countries affected by them. Thus, conflict resolution and development efforts are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing. In the post-conflict phase, there is a clear need for closer coordination between United Nations peace operations and long-term development actors.

In his report on the prevention of armed conflict, Secretary-General Annan underscored the need to move from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention. My delegation fully subscribes to that. The challenge before us is to promote a coherent and integrated approach to early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and conflict resolution. The use of coercive and military measures must be backed up by efforts in the political, humanitarian and development fields.

The Security Council itself has not always addressed evolving conflicts in Africa in an adequate, or even a timely, manner. In our view, the Council must be ready to scrutinize how it can further strengthen its efforts to assist peace efforts on the African continent. In our view, this issue deserves immediate attention.

Conflict resolution is not the responsibility of the Security Council alone, however. The main responsibility clearly rests with the parties to the conflict in question. If the cycle of violence is to be broken, a crucial prerequisite is that the warring parties truly commit themselves to an agenda for peace. Lasting peace cannot be imposed by others; it must be secured by Africans, who acknowledge the close linkage between peace and development and who desire a secure and prosperous future for their children. The leaders of Africa must have the political will to build cooperation with the United Nations in defence of peace and security.

In spite of shortcomings and setbacks, some headway has recently been made in various parts of Africa. There have been positive developments in Sierra Leone; the peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea is holding; and the inter-Congolese dialogue has been initiated. In all three conflicts, constructive dialogue has taken place between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations such as the OAU, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community.

In Sierra Leone in particular, the cooperation between ECOWAS and the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone was essential in bringing about a ceasefire. The combination of a strong United Nations presence, targeted sanctions, an active regional organization and the tireless efforts of regional leaders in mediating between the warring factions and neighbouring countries now seems to be paying off.

The cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU in the field of combating the spread of small arms and eradicating landmines is another positive example of joint efforts. The steps taken by ECOWAS in agreeing to a moratorium on trafficking in small arms should serve as an example to other regions in Africa and elsewhere. Regional organizations have an essential role to play in implementing the Programme of Action of last year's Conference on small arms. Let me add that enhancing cooperation with such organizations is one of the priorities for Norwegian efforts in this regard.

My delegation welcomes recent developments in which regional organizations have been more proactive with regard to conflict resolution in Africa. Given their first-hand knowledge of the situation on the ground and their vested interest in seeing conflicts resolved, they have a crucial role to play in this field. The United Nations, for its part, has expertise and resources that can assist regional efforts. The roles are clearly supplementary and mutually reinforcing. It thus seems that the proposal of Mauritius to establish a working group to consider ways of improving relations between the United Nations and the OAU is a constructive and timely one.

We must acknowledge that there is still significant potential for further enhancing regional capacity and improving coordination between the United Nations and regional bodies. As a member of the Security Council, Norway will continue to promote such coordination. Moreover, we are encouraged by the fact that several African leaders have become actively engaged in the search for solutions to complex regional conflicts. This demonstrates that Africa is increasingly assuming responsibility for resolving its own conflicts.

The President: I thank the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Norway for his kind words addressed to me and to my country.

Mr. Marín Bosch (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): May I extend the appreciation of the Mexican Government to you, Sir, for presiding over this important meeting. It is an excellent initiative of the Mauritian presidency, since it addresses a major regional security matter in which the international community has a great stake.

We welcome the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Mr. Amara Essy, a good friend of Mexico for many years. His presence at this meeting strengthens the dialogue between the United Nations and his organization.

We firmly support the New African Initiative, which seeks a renewed partnership for the development of Africa and lays the foundations for establishing a stronger, more democratic and freer African Union.

My Government expresses its solidarity with the Government and the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular the inhabitants of Goma, so severely affected by the eruption of the nearby volcano. This act of nature further compounds a situation that was already difficult. Our condolences go likewise to the Government of Nigeria and the citizens of Lagos.

Conflicts in Africa demand greater attention from this Council and the OAU to find lasting solutions. Mexico has advocated the strengthening of international cooperation to resolve the grave economic and social problems of peoples, which in many cases are among the causes of conflict.

Analysis of conflict in Africa must be approached from a comprehensive perspective, including the causes of conflicts and means to prevent and resolve them and, once they are resolved, ways of laying foundations for sustainable economic growth and peace. The Government of Mexico believes that given the dimensions of conflict in Africa, it is necessary not only to involve the Security Council in isolated strategies but also to integrate into this effort the General Assembly and other organs and programmes of the United Nations system to carry out tasks in the region, including the Bretton Woods institutions, of course, and the OAU itself. In Africa, as in other regions, the United Nations must be less reactive and more proactive.

The reports of the Secretary-General on the various African issues on the agendas of both the General Assembly and the Council have certain elements in common. In addition to looking at the evolution of conflicts from their visible inception to recent developments, they review their consequences as well. In almost all reports we see with concern a deterioration of the living standards of the populations of the countries in conflict. There are also other factors, such as environmental disasters, especially drought in various regions, and health disasters, such as AIDS, which have struck the continent and have weakened the economically active population.

The data on human development in the latest report of the United Nations Development Programme indicate that only 15 of the 53 African countries are found at the average human development level. None of those 53 countries has a high human development index, and more than two thirds are at the low level.

In addressing the agenda item "Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" at its last session, the General Assembly requested the Organization to focus its efforts on education and transfer of technology. We believe that the role of education in preventing conflicts is crucial to the solution of regional crises.

Life expectancy in Africa is among the lowest in the world. Education will help to cope with the AIDS pandemic. If to all of this we add the problems of malaria and malnutrition, prospects are not encouraging. We of course recognize the efforts being made by various humanitarian organizations. However, we believe that those efforts are not yet sufficient, and the international community should increase its cooperation and inter-agency coordination in order to address the problems at their root and attend to the more immediate consequences.

In order to be in a position to resolve its economic and social problems, the continent requires greater investment flows, a higher level of official development assistance, a concessional approach to the treatment of its external debt and greater access to international markets. It also requires steady efforts by its Governments to consolidate democratic institutions, respect and promote human rights and strengthen the rule of law. The Secretary-General's initiative to eliminate the debt of the most indebted countries, contained in the final document of the Millennium Summit, is an encouraging measure that we should pursue.

At the Millennium Summit, African leaders underscored the need to achieve greater market access for African products. To achieve that, developed countries should adopt special measures. We propose to the group of major industrialized countries that it include on the agenda of its next meeting the question of making progress, both bilaterally and through the World Trade Organization, in the reduction of trade barriers imposed upon products from Africa.

Mexico is convinced that only through economic development will it be possible to prevent and resolve conflict and, once they are resolved, to lay foundations for lasting growth and peace. This subject is closely linked to the questions that will be addressed in March, in Monterrey, at the International Conference on Financing for Development.

In the case of Africa, there are problems that require a speedier solution, which the letter of the Permanent Representative of Mauritius has identified. Among those that require immediate attention, let me briefly refer to three: illicit trafficking in firearms, illegal exploitation of natural resources and humanitarian crises.

In the region we can observe illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons that requires urgent solutions in order to prevent conflicts and stop present conflicts from deteriorating further. All States have the right to ensure their own national defence, but the excessive accumulation of arms has a destabilizing effect and has a deep impact of the development of peoples. The production of and illicit trafficking in firearms represent a global problem, whose solution requires adherence to the provisions agreed to in international instruments and regional mechanisms. Africa has shown a willingness to address the problem, as exemplified by the Bamako Declaration of 1997 and efforts made in the framework of the Organization of African Unity.

The African States can and should contribute to reducing their military expenditures, applying measures of transparency and confidence-building. Further, one might investigate more rigorously the sources of shipments of arms to Africa, especially as regards their export to areas of conflict or tension. Exporting countries also have a responsibility to prevent the diversion of weapons for illicit purposes and their dispatch to conflict areas.

Regarding humanitarian issues in conflict areas, unfortunately, it has not always been possible to effectively apply the already existing rules of international humanitarian law. In the past, the civilian population was an indirect victim of combat between belligerent armies. Today, they tend to be the principal target of those attacks. We must pay special attention to children involved in conflicts. Recruiting or enlisting children in armed forces or encouraging them to participate actively in hostilities is a war crime, as laid down by the Statute of the International Criminal Court.

We also note with concern the problem of the illegal exploitation of natural resources. Not only are African nations being deprived of resources indispensable for development, but the illegal exploitation of these resources also serves to finance belligerent groups. It is time to design new approaches to stop the pillaging of natural resources, a practice occurring in most African countries where conflict exists. One possible solution to this problem is the Kimberly process, which proposes the use of certificates of origin to prevent the illegal import and export of diamonds. As chair of the Sierra Leone Sanctions Committee, my country will endeavour to make control regimes effective.

Given the primary responsibility of the United Nations in matters of international peace and security, it is necessary to strengthen support for the regional and subregional measures adopted in Africa. This support is necessary because the United Nations has neither the capacity nor the resources to deal with all the problems that might arise on the African continent. Therefore, the United Nations should as far as possible try to complement, rather than monopolize, efforts made in Africa to solve the continent's problems.

Mexico attaches great importance to the New African Initiative. The President of my country,

Vicente Fox, has expressed personally the value he attaches to and his interest in the strengthening of the Initiative and the emergence of the African Union.

I would like to extend a message of friendship to the nations of Africa. My Government is determined to reorient our foreign policy towards Africa. It aims to give new impetus to our ties of friendship and cooperation, taking advantage of the processes of change developing in Mexico and Africa. Our country is convinced that the African peoples require special attention. We are willing to assist in the promotion of the most important themes of the continent's agenda.

In conclusion, those of us who have followed the activities of the United Nations for some time know that the Organization's interest in the problems of Africa is usually sporadic. We hope that we are now seeing the beginning of a qualitative change in the relationship between Africa and the United Nations.

The President: I thank the Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs for Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe and the United Nations of Mexico for his kind words addressed to me.

Mrs. Camara (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is very happy to see you, Sir, presiding over this important Security Council meeting on Africa. The Mauritian presidency for the month of January should be congratulated on giving the central place to African issues in recent weeks. I would like to congratulate you, Sir, most sincerely for that.

My delegation would also like to join the unanimous praise for the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his efforts for peace in the world. I would also like to welcome the Secretary-General of the African Union, Mr. Amara Essy, and my colleagues, the ministers of other countries that have agreed to take part in this meeting.

As well, allow me to convey to the peoples and Governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Nigeria the condolences of the people and Government of the Republic of Guinea for the tragedies that occurred in Goma and Lagos.

This meeting of the Security Council is more than symbolic. It reflects the unanimous resolve of the Council to be more involved in seeking solutions to the various kinds of recurring problems afflicting Africa, particularly those involving peace and security.

The debt burden, the continuing drop in the prices of raw materials, poverty, HIV/AIDS, bad governance and the consequences of numerous conflicts are some of the factors explaining the current situation of Africa. It is also recognized that all efforts to address these challenges will be in vain until the conflicts have been halted and totally resolved. There is no hope for development without peace and security. Similarly, democracy, so frequently called for by our various partners, cannot be achieved in conditions of poverty.

Several hotbeds of tension in Africa continue to concern the international community. In the Great Lakes region, the situation is more complex and of great concern. National dialogue in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, scheduled to be resumed in South Africa, is more necessary than ever. Its conclusions should provide the foundation for genuine national reconciliation. The various State and non-State political actors must preserve the spirit of Gaborone.

The commitments of the Governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi contained in the joint communiqué signed on the occasion of the visit of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burundi to Kinshasa are in this regard very encouraging. The other political actors parties to the conflict must take inspiration from that action in the interests of the region.

Guinea reiterates its full support for an international conference on the Great Lakes region, whose conclusions, we hope, will support regional efforts. We also appeal to all regional actors to look beyond mere security concerns and give priority to cooperation in the search for peace and stability in the region.

The Council can take credit for devoting an important meeting last month to the subregion of West Africa, which has witnessed deadly and destructive internal conflicts during recent years. However, several signs indicate that the efforts of the international community are starting to bear fruit. Encouraging signs are starting to appear in many places. Guinea welcomes the work of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), which has enabled a gradual restoration of State authority and the progress achieved in the implementation of the programme of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR). Despite the official conclusion of the DDR programme, the collection of certain weapons still in circulation among

the public should be continued because they could pose a threat to post-electoral peace.

Next 14 May, Sierra Leone, long torn by a complex conflict, will hold general elections, which we hope will be free and transparent, with a heavy turnout. My delegation welcomes UNAMSIL's support for the election process and the adoption of Council resolution 1389 (2002).

The long-term reintegration of former combatants remains a major concern of my delegation. The measures taken must be re-evaluated and strengthened in order to avoid a repeat of the Liberian syndrome.

In connection with work to stabilize the subregion, my delegation welcomes the ongoing efforts being made by the leaders of the Mano River Union countries to restore confidence and get the Union's activities started again. The forthcoming tripartite summit will, we sincerely hope, lead to the strengthening of confidence-building measures to overcome the obstacles remaining on the road to lasting peace.

With regard to the current situation in the subregion of West Africa, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has taken a number of important initiatives to restore peace. Among them are the implementation of many mechanisms for the prevention, management and settlement of conflicts; the creation of a Council of Elders made up of eminent persons; the implementation of measures to build confidence among States; assistance to member States in consolidating democracy; the establishment of four monitoring stations as an early warning system; and the fight to stop the proliferation of light weapons, including the Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Light Weapons. That Moratorium has just been renewed for a second three-year period.

My delegation welcomes the close cooperation between ECOWAS and the United Nations to restore peace and security in West Africa. The experience in crisis management that ECOWAS has acquired in recent years is enlightening and could be of use in terms of a genuine partnership between the United Nations and that organization. The opening of a United Nations Office next to ECOWAS in Dakar is further evidence of their common resolve to strengthen ties and unite their efforts. This kind of "proximity diplomacy" will be helpful.

Mr. President, as you know, peace has a price. This is why my delegation would hope that extinguishing conflicts in West Africa will be accompanied by the implementation of a comprehensive, integrated programme for economic recovery. This would involve effectively completing DDR programmes and the long-term rehabilitation of ex-combatants in Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau, extending State authority by setting up the proper kinds of structures, ensuring the voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons by strengthening confidence-building measures, and setting up self-sustaining pilot programmes. The United Nations regional office will help to implement this comprehensive peace-building strategy.

In West Africa, as in the Great Lakes region, the linkage between the ongoing fighting and the illicit trading in natural and other resources has been clearly established. Pressure must be maintained on those whose responsibility has already been proven. Measures envisaged or taken by the Security Council must be effectively implemented so as to neutralize their harmful activities, which are damaging to international peace and security. Impunity for those responsible for plundering resources is just as bad for international peace and security as the plundering itself.

Questions involving Africa account for more than half of the work of the Security Council. Today's debate is part of a series of meetings that the Council has initiated in order to ensure that it has an effective role in the maintenance of international peace and security, particularly in Africa.

We should consider setting up new instruments that would help the Council to prevent and resolve conflicts in Africa. In this regard, we would like to propose the setting up of a high-level Security Council working group to take a look at what is being done with regard to Africa. Its conclusions should lead to the elaboration of a comprehensive, integrated strategy for a multisectoral plan of action. It would be a question primarily of taking stock of thinking about how to improve coordination and cooperation between the Council, the OAU and regional and subregional organizations.

Implementing such a plan of action could be facilitated by a unit within the Secretariat to coordinate multisectoral activities for Africa. Such a focal point

within the Secretariat, and for Member States, would have a comprehensive multisectoral vision of African issues and would be able to work on and streamline their handling. Implementing such proposals would help to strengthen what the Security Council can do to maintain peace and security in Africa. Also, it would be desirable to establish closer cooperation between the Security Council and the OAU, particularly the latter's Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution.

As we begin this new millennium, we have to say that the poverty and backwardness of Africa are in vivid contrast to the prosperity of the developed world. Africa knows it must take the right steps to avoid being excluded from the phenomenon of globalization that characterizes international relations today. And so, Africa has decided to enter a new stage in its history, transforming the OAU into the African Union and adopting a new development programme, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). These two new initiatives are in keeping with the profound aspirations of our peoples, and they should open up new prospects for the African continent. Globalization, far from being a handicap for Africa, could provide both the context and the resources for its recovery.

The New African Initiative, re-named the New Partnership for Africa's Development, adopted in July 2001 in Lusaka at the last OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, should enable Africa to participate actively in world economics and politics and thus emerge from its current marginalized situation. NEPAD offers the international community, particularly the developed countries, a historic opportunity to establish a genuine world partnership with Africa, based on mutual interest and shared responsibilities.

But these ambitious goals will not be reached as long as the many conflicts in Africa continue. Here, the work of the Security Council and the equally important work of the OAU and subregional African organizations must be coordinated and strengthened to end these conflicts and enable our countries to take up the challenge of development.

In conclusion, I would simply like to reiterate my deep gratitude to the delegation of Mauritius for having organized this debate.

The President: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Guinea for her kind words addressed to the Chair.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Léonard She Okitundu, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. She Okitundu (Democratic Republic of the Congo) *(spoke in French)*: Mr. President, at a time when your presidency of the Security Council is coming to an end, allow me to say how proud and deeply satisfied my delegation has been to have the Council guided during January by Mauritius, a fraternal country and, like mine, a member of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

I would like to take this opportunity to heartily congratulate you for the excellent initiative you have taken in organizing the present meeting on the situation in Africa. Your presidency has been marked by a very special concern — about the problems of Africa, your continent. Thus, conflicts and human tragedies — including the war of aggression of which my country, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, is a victim — have received the particular attention of the Council. I am therefore most grateful to the United Nations for keeping the question of the situation in Africa on its agenda, through the Security Council, and for its efforts to find solutions to conflict situations in the world.

Before continuing, on behalf of the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, His Excellency General Joseph Kabila, and in the name of our Government and people, I would like to express to you, and through you to the whole international community, our gratitude and humble thanks for the generosity and solidarity that you have shown, particularly in reacting with the required speed to the humanitarian emergency created by the eruption of the Nyarigongo Volcano in the Congolese province of North Kivu. Our thanks go especially to our Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for responding as soon as he was informed of the scope of the tragedy in the city of Goma and its environs, especially the loss of life and physical damage. His action, and that of all States, organs and organizations and of all people of goodwill are an expression of their concern to safeguard human life and to respect the dignity of the victims at Goma and its environs.

We have been pleasantly surprised by the significant mobilization of means and funds to address the most urgent necessities. We urge the Council to pursue those praiseworthy efforts not only to keep the emergency under control, but also to ensure in the immediate future the reorganization and reconstruction of the city of Goma. This mobilization of the international community in support of the Democratic Republic of the Congo should be pursued and broadened in order to help the Congolese people to rebuild their country, restore their unity and create the conditions necessary — especially institutional conditions — to deal with such tragedies. We call on the Secretary-General of our universal Organization and on the Secretary General of our regional organization to spare no effort to coordinate the entire mobilization so as to facilitate the humanitarian work and to promote the unhindered delivery of assistance to the population of Goma and its environs.

The responsibility for maintaining international peace and security falls to the Security Council. It is regrettable, however, that insofar as Africa is concerned, results do not always attain the desired level. The need to give the Security Council an effective role in the maintenance of international peace and security, especially in Africa, has become crucial.

The Organization of African Unity/African Union is also playing a very important role in the search for viable solutions, particularly within the framework of the Central Organ of its Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution.

It is of capital importance that the partnership between the two institutions be strengthened with a view to enhanced efficiency and convincing results. In this regard, I wish to thank Mr. Amara Essy, Secretary General of the Organization of African Unity/African Union, for his particularly informative presentation. His presence among us today bears witness to the interest that Africa attaches to this question and is particularly useful in conveying both the concerns and the points of view of Africa. I hope that his participation in this meeting on the situation in Africa will point the way towards a future dialogue between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, which we encourage and hope will prove to be useful, constructive and productive.

Africa is, in effect, the theatre of many conflicts and crises violating the United Nations Charter and threatening international peace and security. The spread of these conflicts requires United Nations action in the quest for peace to be reconsidered in order to make it more effective.

Governments are, of course, primarily responsible for maintaining the peace. In order to achieve that goal and to inspire the confidence of the United Nations, they must assume their full responsibility in the settlement of disputes and the in the establishment of the conditions necessary to the flourishing of democracy, the pursuit of development and the eradication of poverty. It is therefore important that the United Nations assist in the strengthening of capacities, support subregional initiatives to resolve conflicts on the continent and cooperate more closely with the Organization of African Unity.

Such partnership, however, is unfortunately not operational. One clear result of this inadequate cooperation is the perception that the Security Council is often guilty of delaying the full implementation of its own resolutions. Indeed, international action based on the Security Council's resolutions seems to yield optimum results only outside Africa, while support for preventing and settling conflicts in Africa in no way corresponds to the magnitude of the problems.

"What holds true on one side of the Pyrenees may be false on the other," one French political analyst has said. In other parts of the world experiencing ongoing problems, assistance is granted on a massive economic scale and through trade advantages, while everything is done to encourage countries to improve regional cooperation and to pursue their efforts towards political, economic and social reform so as to enable them to consolidate democracy and human rights, good governance and the promotion of the rule of law and political stability, thus laying the foundations of sustainable development. Nothing of the sort occurs in Africa. With regard to the settlement of conflicts, one clearly sees the application of double standards. The most egregious manifestation of that phenomenon is the experience of my country in recent years.

The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains an issue of great concern. Years of conflict have created tragic humanitarian situations and dangerous political instability. The Council continues to have trouble ensuring respect for its resolutions. The implementation in particular of resolution 1304 (2000) — which calls for the demilitarization of the

city of Kisangani and its environs, the orderly withdrawal of foreign forces from Congolese territory and cooperation in the deployment of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo — has not even begun. Kisangani remains occupied and the sound of marching boots is again being heard. The occupying forces, rather than being withdrawn, are being reinforced on Congolese territory.

My Government attaches special importance to the improvement and effectiveness of humanitarian operations in armed conflicts and natural disasters, and particularly to assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons. Similarly, we duly appreciate the efforts of the United Nations to promote and develop international humanitarian law. The natural disaster in Goma, a Congolese city under Rwandese occupation, and the response of the international community are a clear demonstration of the United Nations capacity to respond to humanitarian challenges.

As to the illegal exploitation of a country's natural resources and other forms of wealth, in which private and state actors engage in order to enrich themselves shamelessly on the sweat and blood of innocent victims and to sustain numerous conflicts, that criminal activity should be the subject of concerted global action to eradicate it.

Ever since the creation of the United Nations some 50 years ago, no programme that has been undertaken has succeeded in eradicating poverty. Yet, poverty, ignorance, intolerance and exclusion are at the root of many conflicts tearing Africa apart. The elimination of poverty would therefore clearly have an impact on preventing conflicts and help to make this century one of harmony defined by peace, tolerance and prosperity for all humanity.

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, with the end of the cold war and the rapid development of new technologies, especially information technologies, we must review our strategies not only in the field of peacekeeping, but also in that of development. In that respect, my Government encourages greater coordination between the main agencies involved in conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction, in particular the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, so as to deepen consideration of questions relating to improved interaction between the two organs and to promote an integrated approach to peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction.

My Government welcomes the fact that the Economic and Social Council has held a debate on the role of the United Nations system in support of the efforts of the African countries to achieve sustainable development. We also welcome the decisions of our heads of State last year to launch the New African Initiative and, in October, to consolidate the Initiative by establishing the New Partnership for Africa's Development. These commendable initiatives prove, if there is any need to do so, that Africa is ready to assume full responsibility for its own development and future.

In addition to the many obstacles it faces — notably poverty, the burden and management of debt, underdevelopment and war — Africa is encountering the new challenges presented in particular by the emergence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. These new challenges could halt its development and threaten its very existence. Together, we must reaffirm the importance of concerted international action to address the HIV/AIDS scourge, given its negative impact on the social fabric and thus on the future of the current generation and of those to come. To that end, we must, inter alia, encourage the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS to continue strengthening its cooperation with African States with a view to developing better national practices and policies in HIV/AIDS education, prevention, detection, counselling and treatment.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate my delegation's firm belief in the existence of a close link between development in Africa and the establishment of peace and the stabilization of its socio-economic situation.

The maintenance of peace is an important element of the activity of the United Nations. I would like to express the hope that the Security Council, the principal organ of the United Nations charged with maintaining international peace and security, will be up to the task of fulfilling its responsibilities more effectively, in keeping with the spirit and the letter of the commitments renewed at the Millennium Summit.

The United Nations must be innovative with regard to international strategy. Conflicts notwithstanding, relations of deterrence or force must not be used to build peace. Rather, it should be allowed to emerge through the sound common management of needs and various

problems that arise, in particular by taking maximum advantage of inherent socio-economic potential.

This is our understanding of the scope of the international conference on peace, stability, democracy and development in the Great Lakes region, to be convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in close cooperation with the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity. My Government sincerely hopes that that conference will succeed and serve as a model for the peaceful settlement of disputes, not only for Africa but also for all parts of the world where peace processes are under way or are being initiated, in the best interests of all the populations concerned.

The President: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is Mr. Abdelkader Messahel, Minister in Charge of African Affairs of Algeria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Messahel (Algeria) *(spoke in French)*: First of all, I would like to tell you, Mr. President, how much we welcome your important initiative of organizing a special meeting of the Security Council devoted to the situation in Africa. This initiative, crowning your country's brilliant presidency throughout the month of January, once again bears witness to the constancy and firmness of your personal commitment, and that of Mauritius, in the service of peace and security on our continent and throughout the world. The eminent part you played in the peaceful resolution of the Comoros crisis, which led to the initiation of a process of restoring constitutional order, will allow the nation of the Comoros to regain institutional and political stability. This result is all the more praiseworthy when we consider that it supports the wise and responsible decision taken at the 1999 Summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), in Algiers, not to recognize regimes installed as the result of coups d'état, nor to admit them to our continental organization. In re-establishing their fundamental right to free expression and sovereign choice, the Comorian people are supporting the general movement in Africa to establish and consolidate democracy.

Today's debate is all the more timely because it takes place after the OAU Summit in Lusaka adopted, last July, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) initiative. In this context, I would like to emphasize that this African initiative, which in a global and pragmatic way tackles the problems of African renewal, places at the top of its list of priorities the settlement of disputes and the resolution of conflicts on our continent. It incorporates the overall lines of a plan of action that considers the question of peace and security in all its dimensions. In its analysis of the causes of conflict in Africa, the initiative recognizes that shortcomings in the field of governance have contributed significantly to the aggravation of poverty and feelings of marginalization. The New Partnership for Africa's Development enshrines peace, security and stability in Africa as the key to the process of launching an authentic and lasting dynamic of growth and economic and social development.

The strategy defined by the initiative rests on three fundamental pillars. The first pillar is the promotion of long-term conditions favourable to development and security. This means addressing the roots of conflicts by promoting good governance at the political and economic levels, combating poverty and actively integrating the continent within the world economy.

The second pillar consists in strengthening the capacity of African institutions in terms of early warning, preventive diplomacy and the management and settlement of conflicts. In this connection, let us recall that the OAU, for more than a decade, has had a specific mechanism to settle conflicts and promote peace. In particular, support should be given in many forms to this organ of primary importance for Africa.

The third pillar has as its goal the lasting establishment of the principles on which the New Partnership rests.

By committing themselves to the great new NEPAD project, the African heads of State and Government have clearly demonstrated their will to concentrate on the added value inherent in such an initiative. NEPAD does not overlap with existing mechanisms and is not designed to replace any current programmes or activities. Rather, its task is to improve and strengthen existing institutions by playing a political role as a catalyst and facilitator in the promotion and maintenance of peace and in post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction. It is designed to bring about better coordination and

consistency in the mechanisms and structures at the subregional, continental and international levels.

To better carry out these tasks, the Implementation Committee of Heads of State and Government of NEPAD has decided to create a subcommittee for peace and security, composed of the heads of State of Algeria, Gabon, Mali, Mauritius and South Africa. The subcommittee will also examine policies and institutional arrangements, as well as the mobilization of resources to establish lasting peace, security and stability in Africa.

Algeria has always promoted the peaceful settlement of disputes, and it has often been called upon to play the role of mediator, either in internal conflicts, such as those in northern Mali and the northern Niger, or in bilateral disputes, as that between Ethiopia and Eritrea. My country has also participated in peacekeeping operations in several parts of the world. The experience we have acquired, and in particular our experience with conflict settlement in Ethiopia and Eritrea, has enabled us to learn a number of lessons that I would like to share with the Council.

First, if a peace mediation is to succeed, it is essential to make sure that the political will to seek peace exists among the belligerent parties.

Secondly, recourse to mediation should take place in an atmosphere of clarity and transparency. Whoever is designated mediator must enjoy recognized credibility, must be known to be impartial and must enjoy the full trust of the parties to the conflict.

Thirdly, the intervention of facilitators, coordinated perfectly with the activity of the mediators at crucial phases of the process, can lend momentum to the peace process. An example of this is when the United States of America and the European Union supported President Abdelaziz Bouteflika during his mediation between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Fourthly, the creation of a regional environment favourable to peace is a determining factor in the success of peace mediation.

Fifthly, it may also be necessary to set up targeted sanctions designed to prevent the sale and delivery of arms and ammunition as well as illicit trade in strategic mining resources or other products, as has taken place in the case of certain belligerents.

Finally, the settlement of a conflict must be accompanied by measures to bring about rehabilitation and reconstruction.

The new momentum that the United Nations wishes to lend to its activities in the context of conflict prevention and settlement is in keeping with our will to see a genuine synergy emerge in Africa between the various direct and indirect actors involved, so that our common undertaking, carried out in a spirit of solidarity, will serve to bring about lasting and genuine peace on the African continent.

In the context of this collective effort, and on the basis of our modest experience in mediating African conflicts, we deem it crucial to ensure that 10 conditions are met, in order to bring about the full realization of the peace objectives we seek to achieve.

These 10 conditions are as follows: first, the strengthening of continental and subregional capacities to prevent, manage and settle conflicts, through financial and technical contributions; second, the provision of significant support to the OAU and to subregional organizations to develop their early-warning systems; third, strengthened international cooperation with respect to training in the areas of conflict prevention and peacekeeping; fourth, significant assistance for demining; fifth, increased support for the demobilization and disarmament of combatants as well for their reintegration into economic and social life; sixth, the adoption and implementation of a plan of action to put an end to the illicit traffic in, and the proliferation of, light weapons; seventh, increased assistance for post-conflict rehabilitation, reconstruction and development; eighth, assistance to countries hosting refugees, in order to ease their burden; ninth, ongoing cooperation in the fight against terrorism; and tenth, special efforts to protect children and to prevent their being forcibly recruited into conflicts.

These are some of the essential prerequisites that must be met in the context of the efforts of the international community in order truly to establish lasting peace and stability in Africa.

In conclusion, I should like to state that Africa has embarked on a peace process that must be consolidated, expanded and deepened. I am convinced that Africa's efforts will receive the full support of the members of the Security Council and of the international community as a whole. The Council's debate, under the wise guidance of my brother, the

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mauritius, will, I am sure, lend the necessary momentum to peace efforts in Africa and ensure their full success.

The President: I thank the Minister in Charge of African Affairs of Algeria for the very kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is Mr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio, Minister for Foreign Affairs, African Union and Senegalese Abroad in Senegal. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Gadio (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): As Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), it is my pleasure, first of all, to convey to you our great pride and to express our heartfelt congratulations on the outstanding manner in which you have been discharging your mandate, with, of course, the valuable support of all of our colleagues from the Security Council.

Allow me also to say how greatly ECOWAS and my country appreciate the Council's kind and generous decision to devote a special meeting to the situation in Africa.

Indeed, this initiative is all the more commendable in view of the fact that, at the dawn of this new millennium, the African continent continues to face major challenges in three areas: peace, development and good governance.

The quest for lasting peace in Africa has always been at the heart of the concerns of the United Nations. Clear testimony of this fact is the outstanding report of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, entitled "Causes of conflict and the promotion of sustainable peace and durable development in Africa". We fully share his conviction of the need to tackle the roots of this evil, and we believe that careful follow-up of the processes of political normalization is an imperative need, in particular in countries such as Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone, where peace remains fragile.

Allow us here at the outset to refer to the highly instructive example of Guinea-Bissau in terms of conflict prevention. This is a typical case, in which the international community, as it sometimes does, is standing by without taking urgent action while the seeds of a potential conflict are sown. This is akin to trying to save the few billion CFA francs which might be necessary tomorrow to save Guinea-Bissau, and then investing 10 times more once it is too late — when the tensions that are gripping that key West African country have done their damage.

Let me say that Mr. Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal — together, of course, with the Secretary-General of the United Nations — is continuing to appeal to the international community for urgent assistance to Guinea-Bissau, in order to help it pay salaries and to resolve its disarmament problems. Indeed, to require that small African country — whose soldiers are believed to number between 35,000 and 45,000 and which has experienced numerous conflicts and civil wars — to meet the criteria of good governance and transparent administration, inter alia, before receiving international assistance could lead to a catastrophic situation. If the concept of conflict prevention has any meaning, it should be applied as quickly as possible, and in the best possible way, to Guinea-Bissau.

I should like to reiterate, however, that Secretary-General Kofi Annan has repeatedly demonstrated his deep concern and his personal interest in resolving the crisis in Guinea-Bissau. To that end, he needs the involvement of the international community. In the case of Guinea-Bissau, and in other cases in our subregion and our subcontinent, we deem equally important the continued strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations on the one hand and the Organization of African Unity and subregional organizations on the other in the area of conflict prevention, management and resolution.

In this respect, we are gratified to see the upcoming establishment in Dakar, following the relevant recommendation of the report of Ibrahima Fall, of a United Nations Office in West Africa. I am convinced that this will, inter alia, help us better to address the problem of peace and security in our subregion.

Here I should like to assure the Council of the readiness, determination and commitment of Mr. Abdoulaye Wade, President of Senegal and the current Chairman of ECOWAS, who, as a dedicated and loyal champion of political compromise and social peace, will spare no effort in working towards these objectives. In this framework, together with his brothers from the Mano River Union, he intends to pursue his initiatives so that peace and stability ultimately win the day in this region.

As the Council is aware, the three heads of State — President Tejan Kabbah of Sierra Leone, President Taylor of Liberia and President Conté of Guinea — have confidence in the mediating efforts of President Abdoulaye Wade. They believe that they all can meet very soon to engage in confidence-building, to develop their personal relationship and to overcome the tensions and conflict situations we have seen in this part of Africa. We therefore have high hopes in this respect.

While the efforts made by the Africans themselves are important, it is worth noting that a determined commitment by the international community on our side, recognizing the role of poverty and a certain type of political culture as latent causes of conflict, could help find a comprehensive solution for this scourge.

I also wish to appeal to friendly countries and the donor community to actively participate in renewing the continent through consistent support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). By opting for a strategy of breaking with aid and debt, our leaders have recalculated the continent's priorities and have brought out pragmatic and realistic objectives aimed at, inter alia, filling the gap in resources, increasing domestic savings and attracting private foreign capital to ensure financing of infrastructures, agriculture, education and health, and drastically reducing the digital divide with the North.

If you will allow me a very brief parenthesis here, Mr. President, I wish to say that increasingly in the speeches of country development partners, we have noted that in their listing of NEPAD priority sectors the infrastructure sector often is not mentioned, and that concerns us greatly. Africa considers the infrastructure sector as a high priority; indeed, as NEPAD's highest priority. We are expecting, in discussion with our partners, to show that the playing field is not level; if Africa does not resolve the infrastructure gap, Africa will not have a chance. It will remain marginalized, and that is what NEPAD was intended to prevent.

It is within the framework of this struggle for the rebirth of our continent that His Excellency Mr. Abdoulaye Wade, President of Senegal, called for regional sectoral meetings in Dakar yesterday, 28 January 2002, in order to identify in each region of Africa projects in various priority sectors — infrastructure, the environment, new information and communication technologies, energy — before their consideration by the next NEPAD conference on financing, to be held at Dakar from 15 to 17 April, and by the G-8 Summit in Ottawa from 26 to 28 June.

Indeed, the prospects for peace, stability and economic prosperity could well turn out to be illusory without genuine democracy and real rule of law in the African countries. Because of this concern, the heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), meeting in Dakar on 20 and 21 December 2001, at the twenty-fifth session of the Summit Conference, reaffirmed their commitment to promote a more calm political and social environment based on democracy, tolerance and the acceptance of differences and political compromises. They also decided to advance the concept of border countries, based on continuing dialogue at the highest level, and the implementation of joint programmes for social and economic development, as well as the establishment of basic infrastructure with a collective plan.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate, and emphasize, the readiness of ECOWAS and of Senegal to cooperate fully with the United Nations for the eradication of conflicts and the economic flourishing of our continent.

In renewing our profound gratitude to the Security Council for its wise and timely decision to devote this meeting to Africa, I would like to nourish the hope that the international community will take an active part in the efforts of the sons and daughters of our continent for the advent of an Africa reconciled with itself and freed from the yoke of poverty. The African renaissance is surely under way. It is possible if we Africans, first of all, and the Council along with us, firmly believe in it.

The President: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs, African Union and Senegalese Abroad of Senegal for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is Mr. Katele Kalumba, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Zambia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kalumba (Zambia): Let me begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of January 2002. Let me also thank you for convening this timely meeting to allow us to examine the issues of

conflict in Africa, discuss the causes and propose possible solutions. Let me thank the Ambassador of Mali for the able manner in which he chaired the Council's deliberations during the month of December 2001. I also wish to thank my fellow ministers who have travelled from various countries to come attend this important debate. Allow me also to recognize the presence of our own Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Mr. Amara Essy.

My thanks go to the Security Council for devoting considerable time to organizing this meeting to address conflict situations in Africa and for the efforts the members are making to find solutions. It is important that Governments, regional bodies and our continental organization, the Organization of African Unity, complement each other's efforts. In this way, close cooperation between the Security Council and the OAU will be of immense value in our efforts to find solutions to our chronic problems in Africa. In various forums and declarations, African leaders have pledged to find solutions to these problems, and yet peace has eluded us as a continent. I will return to this subject of leadership in Africa later.

For over 40 years, various parts of Africa have been afflicted by one kind of conflict or another. Conflicts have many causes, which may be internal as well as external. Some are internal, arising from a myriad of reasons, and often are fuelled by external forces. Nearly all the most difficult conflicts arise from the process of State-building. They arise from the fundamental problems of constructing State structures that can serve as vehicles for ensuring the security, sovereignty, dignity and justice of the people. The process has often bred or generated conflict.

Among these are ineffective governance coupled with weak institutions, inequality in the distribution of resources, poverty, ethnicity and regionalism, power struggles within and among the elite, poor conditions of service in public institutions, corruption and nepotism, misallocation of resources, foreign interference, and instability as a result of a very fluid political culture.

In his excellent report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, noted that the causes were multifaceted and included historical, internal and external factors. The curses of colonialism, neocolonialism, the cold war and now globalization are the defining factors in understanding the nature and causes of conflict in Africa. Some of these causes are external, ranging from ideology to attempts to win spheres of influence.

Conflicts, whether internal or external, have the same results. They are ruinous and have a destructive impact on people, livestock, property and infrastructure. They provoke distress, fear, aggression and anxiety. They hinder communication and obstruct problem solving. They also destroy cohesion and unity. They lead to the spread of small arms and light weapons, internal displacement of people and refugees fleeing across borders, resulting in heavy expenses to host countries, including my own.

The nature of conflicts in Africa and the diversity of actors involved in these conflicts require a fundamental rethinking of African security. The tools and techniques for managing conflicts include those suggested by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in "An Agenda for Peace" and by Kofi Annan in his report on the causes of conflict in Africa and in the Millennium report, "We, the Peoples".

Conflict prevention is central to poverty reduction and sustainable development. To work effectively towards peace, African countries and the international community have to work together as partners before, during and after conflict. Promoting peace-building and conflict prevention and resolution requires that donor agencies work very closely with the relevant branches of government and other actors in the international community.

To achieve a long-term solution, policies need to be clear, coherent, comprehensive and well coordinated in order to improve the effectiveness of conflict prevention and management. Relevant policy areas include trade, finance and investment, foreign affairs, defence and development cooperation. Our nations require economic well-being. The ingredients of achieving structural stability are social development, environmental sustainability and regeneration. In addition, the goals of social peace, respect for the rule of law and human rights and social and economic development must be reinforced.

Security, including human security, is a critical foundation for sustainable development. That means protection from systematic human rights abuses,

physical threats, violence, extreme economic, social and environmental risks and threats to territorial sovereignty. Poverty and insecurity mutually and systematically reinforce each other. In this context, the requirement of security goes beyond the classic requisite of defence from military attack and extends to well-being and the protection of persons and property.

To achieve meaningful peace, the involvement of the international community is necessary. Peace-building hinges on trust, cooperation and deeper partnership. Donor engagement in the process is extremely important; we reject the notion of donor fatigue. Conflict resolution goes with humanitarian assistance, and development cooperation requires shared objectives, common approaches to planning processes, and coordination mechanisms.

The African States have no choice but to work with the international community to come up with workable solutions. In a globalized world, there is a need for all to be part of the solution. We hope that, with the leadership of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, efforts to solve these problems will continue.

As I conclude on the issue of conflict in Africa, I wish to touch upon a phenomenon that appears to underpin the perpetuation of conflict: the crisis of politics and leadership in Africa, to which I referred earlier. It is clear that political and social events in Africa, as elsewhere, are heightening a growing awareness of the turbulent environment within which public life has to flourish or falter and within which systems of governance have to be developed and implemented. Whether we call it globalization, neo-colonialism or something else, that evident turbulence is forcing most Governments into technocratic political responses that are self-evidently partial, incoherent and provisional in nature. Consequently, public confidence in politics and politicians has fallen — more so in Africa, perhaps, than in other continents. Political solutions have become numb in the face of growing problems with unemployment, the AIDS pandemic, street children, urban housing standards, ethnic tension and environmental degradation.

The political power structures and traditional structures of representation that worked so well for the West are constantly brought into question. Electorates are, at best, uninterested and, at worst, hostile towards those in power. We can call this an anti-politics. It is happening at a time when there is growing diversity in the media, including the greater reach of those media, where we can watch wars in real time, the private agony of public figures in real time and the fiasco of elections in various countries, both rich and poor, in real time. And, of course, the Internet links us all into a global village.

The question, then, is this: Why should the governance of countries in Africa be in such crisis today when our people are supposedly better informed? It is my view that, above many other reasons why people in Africa, as perhaps elsewhere, are losing faith in political leaders is not just those leaders' incompetence and their failure to get the job done as promised, but rather something bigger. It is an increasing perception that something is missing in political life: morality.

The old definition that politics is the art of lying has come to clash with the search for a moral role in political leadership, which in politics is said to be something that the majority of people demand only of men and women of the church. In Africa, as perhaps elsewhere, there is a growing popular demand for our leaders to be both good managers and good preachers who must be selfless, less cynical, honest and truthful. The issue, then, is not that people have chosen to abandon politics but rather that they want more out of politics: not just effective government, but good government. "Effective" is a managerial concept, but "good" is a value judgement the basic indicators of whose success are broader, less definite and rapidly changing. And there lie not only Africa's political crisis but the seeds of political and moral turbulence: a dynamic that slides countries into war.

The President: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Zambia for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is Her Excellency Ms. Frances Velho Rodrigues, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Mozambique. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Velho Rodrigues (Mozambique): It is a great pleasure and honour for me and my delegation, Sir, to congratulate you and your country — Mauritius, a State member of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and of the Southern African Development Community — on your assumption of the presidency of

the Security Council for the month of January. On behalf of the Government of Mozambique, I warmly welcome your initiative to hold this public debate on the situation in Africa, and I salute the outstanding manner in which you have been steering the work of the Council.

The situation in Africa presents us with a mixed picture. While in some countries • conflict and instability still prevail, in others political, economic and social reforms are taking place, aimed at enhancing and strengthening peace, democracy and prosperity.

As a matter of principle, we believe that the best approach to tackling conflicts is through prevention. In that context, we are of the view that good governance and democracy are crucial for the prevention of conflicts. However, they are things that require adequate resources and a reasonable level of human development, conditions that are not present in most African countries.

Prevention means addressing the root causes of conflicts, which in Africa coincide with the pressing needs and concerns of the people. We refer to poor governance, poverty, endemic diseases, exclusion, questions of State legitimacy, ethnic divisions and the proliferation of arms. Those and other root causes should not be dealt with individually. Peace, democracy and development should be pursued in an integrated and mutually reinforcing manner. Focusing on one of those equally important areas will only create imbalances that can ultimately be a potential source of conflict.

We are aware that good governance and democracy in Africa face tremendous challenges. Among them is the use for political purposes of tribalism, regionalism, racism, ignorance and poverty. This is aggravated by the low level of human development.

On the other hand, our continent continues to witness conflicts related to the exercise of democracy as candidates and their supporters often call into question election results that are perceived to be unjust and unfair. That situation is a clear demonstration of the need for support for governance and democratic institutions in African countries.

The failure of preventive measures brings us to conflict resolution and management. For the success of conflict resolution and management, we need to review peacekeeping mandates and the conventional approach to peacekeeping operations. That is so because the nature of current conflicts differs substantially from that of those envisaged in 1945, when the United Nations was founded. Owing to their multidimensional nature, current conflicts require a comprehensive approach and the involvement of all stakeholders at the national, regional and international levels.

We also believe that success in conflict resolution is closely linked to the level of understanding of the conflict itself. Those involved in the mediation of conflicts should possess a profound knowledge of the nature and dynamics of the conflict in question — knowledge that could allow them to exercise their best judgement, take effective action and provide critical assurances to all parties to the conflict that they are also parties to the solution.

We welcome the Brahimi report, a blueprint that provides an excellent basis for a common strategy for improving the effectiveness of peacekeeping. The recommendations in the report provide a good framework for action in which the strategic and operational aspects of peacekeeping and peace-building are addressed. As we encourage the early implementation of those recommendations, we highlight the strong emphasis in the report on cooperation with regional and subregional organizations.

The African continent attaches great importance to the prevention, resolution and management of conflicts. We are strongly committed to solving problems that affect our continent and to reversing the appalling situation of conflict in Africa. It is within this framework that individual countries and regional and subregional organizations, such as the Organization of African Unity, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) are becoming active and important players in these endeavours. The creation of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution bears testimony to the continent's determination to settle conflicts in Africa.

At the subregional level, the heads of State and Government of the SADC countries signed, at their ordinary Summit in Blantyre, in August 2001, a Protocol for the operationalization of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation. The Organ operates at summit, ministerial and senior

official levels. Its main responsibility is the promotion of peace and security in the region.

At the recent extraordinary Summit, held in Blantyre on 14 January 2002, President Joaquim Chissano, in his capacity as Chairperson of the SADC Organ, reiterated his determination to spare no effort to work with his colleagues for peace and security in Southern Africa. This is in line with the mandate from the SADC heads of State and Government to work tirelessly for a peaceful resolution of the conflicts prevailing in our subregion. The Summit tasked the Organ with formulating a strategy for speeding up the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in close cooperation with the Joint Monitoring Committee. Furthermore, the Summit agreed on the need to work out a strategic indicative plan for the Organ in order to enable it to deal more effectively with issues of politics, defence and security in the region.

We believe that the SADC Organ can play a fundamental role in the promotion of regional peace and security. We invite the United Nations to provide support to and work closely with this institution for the resolution of conflict in southern Africa.

Our analysis of conflicts in Africa must be comprehensive, pragmatic and results-oriented. It should encompass a clear understanding of their root causes, the actors involved and the issues at stake. However, we need to address, together with the dynamics of the current conflicts in Africa, other equally important issues like poverty, underdevelopment and endemic diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and cholera, which claim millions of lives — even more than are claimed by the prevailing conflicts.

The complexity of these issues requires innovative approaches for the betterment of people's lives in Africa. The establishment of the African Union is a clear indication that only by joining our efforts we can find effective solutions for problems affecting the continent. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is an initiative aimed at setting the agenda for the renewal of the continent, based on national and regional priorities and development plans, through a participatory process and a new framework of interaction with the rest of the world.

These efforts deserve the support of the international community so that a solid Union and strong integration can become reality in Africa. In this context, we call upon the international community to render the necessary support and assistance to NEPAD.

We therefore wish to acknowledge the positive steps taken by the Group of Eight in adopting an African Action Plan in support of NEPAD. We have high expectations that this initiative will be translated into concrete results at the forthcoming G-8 Summit in Canada. Furthermore, we should like to welcome the announcement made this morning by Her Excellency Baroness Amos to the effect that the United Kingdom will use its Council presidency in July to focus on African issues. We applaud and encourage this willingness to contribute to the solution of African problems.

The United Nations, particularly the Security Council, has a critical role to play in efforts for the prevention, resolution and management of conflict in Africa. However, United Nations action in conflict situations needs to be reviewed and should include the following features.

First, the United Nations must have a strategic global plan of action and a detailed programme to deal with conflicts in Africa. Secondly, the United Nations should master the necessary ability to generate, among Member States, adequate resources for peace missions. Thirdly, the Organization should negotiate and implement political dispensations that are durable. Fourthly, it must engage itself in peace processes with a long-term perspective. Fifthly, the Security Council must play a proactive role in the resolution of conflict; it should fully implement each and every resolution it adopts regarding peace processes. Sixthly, the Security Council and the Secretary-General should continue to visit, on a regular basis, the areas in conflict, maintain a dialogue with the parties and other actors involved and sustain pressure for the resolution of conflicts.

We are fully aware of the efforts that the United Nations, the Security Council and the Secretary-General have been undertaking to promote peace, security and development in our continent. We commend these efforts. We wish to express our gratitude, and we stress once again our strong determination to work together for the noble cause of bringing about peace and development in Africa.

The President: I thank the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Mozambique for her kind words addressed to me and to my country.

The next speaker is the Vice-Minister for External Relations of Angola. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Chikoti (Angola): It is with great honour and pleasure that An participates in this special meeting of the Security Council dedicated to the situation in Africa. I would like to thank the Council for having taken time from its busy schedule to undertake this important dialogue.

May I recognize the presence here of the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and the head of the African Union, to whom I address my warmest regards. The presence in this Chamber of the Secretary-General of the African Union is in itself sound testimony of the importance of this debate, and we are very honoured to have Secretary-General Amara Essy with us here today.

Let me congratulate Mauritius on presiding over this meeting and on this initiative. We also extend our congratulations to Mali and Guinea and the other members that joined the Council at the beginning of this year. Finally, we congratulate the former members who just completed their mandate and thank all for their continued support.

With the end of cold war in the early 1990s, most African countries entered a new era of multiparty democracy, which has allowed large participation of civil society in the African political arena, thus giving new hope for overall stability and economic development. However, this hope was shattered in many cases by the resurgence of new conflicts, ranging from intra-State, inter-State and cross-border conflicts to ethnic, religious and electoral or post-electoral ones, resulting in an increase in instability and the consequent rise in numbers of refugees and internally displaced people. This characterized the situation in our continent in the 1990s.

My country, Angola, is one that endures the effects of a long-lasting conflict. Conflict in Angola started first as resistance to colonial rule. Then it became an extension of the cold war. It later became a post-electoral conflict. Today, conflict in Angola has become acts of terrorism perpetrated by those, like Mr. Savimbi, who do not want to abide by democratic principles in a pluralistic society. These acts of terrorism have resulted in the deterioration of Government structures and heavy human suffering.

In this context, we welcome all initiatives taken by the United Nations, with which we have worked very closely, by the African Union and by the international community at large to respond not only to the conflict resolution itself but also to the humanitarian situation, the peace-building that we are engaged in today and national reconciliation.

This context of conflict raises a major problem in Africa. The challenges facing African Governments today are how to reduce and prevent the potential for conflict through sustainable political measures while at the same time implementing policies which can enhance economic development and reduce poverty.

This is how my Government, my country, has been responding to this crisis situation in an environment where the challenge of poverty and the potential for conflict is so great. But our own efforts as a Government are not enough, and unless there is a collective and comprehensive strategy that focuses on poverty, stability and peace-building in our subregion, there is very little chance that we will succeed.

That is why, on this specific point, we welcome in this regard the New Partnership for Africa's Development, which, in our view, represents a new hope and to which we pledge our full support. We call upon the international community to support this initiative.

May I also recall that the Millennium Summit adopted specific recommendations for the African continent which were not reviewed due to the sad events of 11 September. I expect that this year some of these recommendations will be reviewed by the General Assembly.

The response of the international community, under the leadership of the United Nations, to the events of 11 September is a clear demonstration of the world's capacity to stand firm before the scourge of terrorism and other conflicts which have plagued the globe, particularly the African continent.

I should like to recall how political transition has been taking place in my subregion. Political transition in southern and Central Africa over the past 12 years has brought important changes. We have seen the end of apartheid and the emergence of democratically elected Governments in both Namibia and South Africa. While political transition has also brought a new conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we have to recognize the important efforts of the

United Nations, which have now led to a Ceasefire Agreement, the establishment of a peacekeeping force and the beginning of inter-Congolese dialogue. On this point we hope that these efforts and the dialogue to be held in South Africa for the next few weeks will continue to bring peace to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We hope that the dialogue will reach positive conclusions that will bring peace to that sisterly country, because unless we have peace globally and in our region, it is very difficult to build sustainable development.

In our region, as far as conflicts are concerned, the heads of State of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) have expressed concern over the situation in Zimbabwe. As a follow-up to the Summit in Blantyre, I think that it is important for the international community to note the importance of the communiqué issued there by the SADC heads of State appealing to the international community to support the Government of Zimbabwe's efforts aimed at strengthening democracy in order to ensure the efficient and effective management of the elections. In addition, the SADC countries called for the cessation of all foreign interference by Western countries that would undermine the sovereignty of that sister country and exacerbate the difficult situation that it is facing.

In regard to Angola, we welcome the efforts of the Secretary-General to keep the country at the centre of United Nations attention and on the Security Council's agenda.

The recent visits to Angola by Mr. Gambari, Under-Secretary-General and the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Africa, and by the monitoring mechanism team have reinforced the importance of sanctions against UNITA and Jonas Savimbi as a means to bring them to stop the war and embrace the terms of the Lusaka Protocol.

In this connection, we reiterate our sincere request to the Secretary-General to continue to engage in all initiatives towards these goals and to bring lasting peace to our subregion, and particularly to Angola.

The President: I thank the Vice-Minister for External Relations of Angola for his kind words addressed to my country.

The next speaker is Mr. Tayb Fassi Fihri, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Morocco. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Fassi Fihri (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): First, allow me to express, on behalf of the delegation of the Kingdom of Morocco, my warmest gratitude to the delegation of the Republic of Mauritius and to you, Mr. President, for taking the highly appreciated initiative of holding an open meeting of the Security Council at the ministerial level to examine the situation in Africa.

I would also like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of our Organization, for his tireless efforts to see to it that Africa receives the urgent priority treatment it deserves.

As a member of the African family, the Kingdom of Morocco, fully sharing all Africa's concerns and aspirations, is gratified to take part in this debate. Because of our long history of being nourished by reciprocal influences and our will to construct a better future with all our African brothers, we wished to be an active party in this high-level debate.

I would first like to recall Morocco's early commitments, to which it remains faithful. At the multilateral level, Morocco contributed to the conception, launching and implementation of the ideal of African unity, and, since then, it has continued to be identified with championing and safeguarding the interests of all Africa. More specifically, whenever international forums have so requested, Morocco has never hesitated to participate in peacekeeping and peace-making operations, whether in the Congo, Somalia or Angola.

At the bilateral level, Morocco has, through its centuries-old relations, played whenever needed a role in reconciliation and mediation and has also worked to create and implement partnerships with its African brothers in the major areas of economic cooperation, culture, education and social development.

In this debate, allow me to focus on three essential points that seem to me to be decisive for the future of our continent. Africa's emphasis on placing its problems more frequently on the agenda of the Security Council is explained by the continuation, or even the worsening, of the situation on our

marginalized continent and also by Africa's wish to see the international community become more involved in assisting the efforts of the African countries to guarantee their security and to ensure progress and development for their peoples.

The analysis of the situation in Africa has been completed and confirmed. The problems have been identified and solutions have been proposed, as is clearly reflected in the Secretary-General's various recommendations on this matter. What remains to be done is put these recommendations in practice, put in place the structures and mechanisms to promote their implementation and to gather the resources to guarantee their success.

For its part, Africa has made its own efforts, and not without success. Thanks to regional and subregional initiatives, some conflicts have been stabilized and others are now being settled. Clear progress has also been made in several regions of Africa with regard to democratization, good governance, respect for human rights and economic reform.

However, a great deal remains to be done to stabilize the continent and enable it to play its rightful role in the current process of globalization. In particular, there is a need to respond specifically and appropriately to the nature and complexity of African conflicts, characterized by the intervention of non-State transnational networks serving private interests and the exacerbation of ethnic rivalries — a direct consequence of artificial, arbitrary borders.

This situation is made all the more dangerous because it is being fuelled by illegal movements of conventional and light weapons on a dangerous scale — I know that you, Mr. President, are keenly aware of this issue — by the use of mercenaries and children in conflicts and by the exploitation of raw materials for the purpose of war.

Meanwhile, the living conditions of African populations, particularly in the regions affected by these conflicts, grow worse year by year, forcing hundreds of thousands of individuals to live in a state of perpetual exile, exposed to war, famine, epidemics and all types of dangers. That forced exodus sometimes jeopardizes the stability of neighbouring States that host these refugees and displaced persons. This is a signi[illegible]nt burden that saps their limited resources, which they need in order to meet the basic needs of their own peoples.

It is clear now that the international community cannot limit itself to separating belligerents and to guaranteeing ceasefires. There is now an imperative need to establish integrated plans that duly take into account all aspects of a conflict, whether political, economic, social or humanitarian. Thus, there is a need to strengthen State institutions and to develop a set of small projects designed to improve the daily lives of the people concerned.

Along with the efforts undertaken by the international community to guarantee the security of the continent, there is a need to promote the social and economic development of Africa. For its part, Africa has taken the initiative in drawing up the New Partnership for Africa's Development, an economic platform whose objective is to place Africa on the path to growth and sustainable development through a renewed partnership with the international community. The pursuit of that goal calls both for Africa to make an organized effort and for sustained interest on the part of the international community — an organized African effort to provide clear visibility for the various partners of Africa, for multilateral and regional institutions and for the economic players, be they African or foreign, public or private; sustained international interest, for the actions undertaken by Africa can succeed only with substantial and continued support from the specialized international institutions. It is clear that the responsibility of each of the African States remains to mobilize totally its full national capacity within this framework.

The Kingdom of Morocco has had much experience and is an active party to this process, which it has supported since the very launching of the Omega Project. Morocco is ready to contribute its expertise to the implementation of a plan of action, in concert with the specialized agencies, for the implementation of the objectives set out by Africa in order to extricate itself from instability and to provide for its development. Morocco remains convinced that subregional and bilateral action by States is indispensable in order to advance the political stability and economic development of the African continent.

The United Nations Secretary-General quite rightly made this a high-priority element of a strategy for Africa. In his report of 13 April 1998, he called

upon "African countries to give priority to establishing uniform standards for equipment and facilities relevant to subregional interactions" (*S/1998/318, para. 102*), and appealed to donors and trading partners to support "the development of common standards and equipment among neighbouring countries" (*ibid.*).

The Kingdom of Morocco, which historically has been at the crossroads of various cultures and civilizations, is working to deepen relations between the northern and the sub-Saharan parts of the continent through the development of the infrastructure necessary to promote and develop exchanges of all kinds. We are also working for the advancement of an ambitious partnership in a framework of shared responsibility between the northern and southern Mediterranean, and even between Europe and Africa.

In conclusion, I would like to express Morocco's full support for the proposal of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Guinea calling for the establishment of a follow-up mechanism within the Security Council for the implementation of the global integrated strategy of the international community for our continent.

The President: I thank the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Morocco for his kind words addressed to me and to my country.

The next speaker is Ms. R. T. Mabudafhasi, Deputy Minister for Environmental Affairs and Tourism of South Africa. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Mabudafhasi (South Africa): My delegation is very pleased, Sir, that you are presiding over this important meeting today. It is indeed proper that under your presidency we are considering the situation in Africa.

The United Nations Charter determines that collectively we must save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights and the dignity and worth of the human person, and promote social progress and better standards of living for all. Specifically, Article 24 confers on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The urgent need for peace and security in Africa poses a special challenge for the Security Council. There can be no doubt that the root causes of conflict in Africa include poverty and underdevelopment, two issues which fall outside the mandate of the Security Council. Given this reality, the question is, how can the Security Council remain relevant to the search for comprehensive peace in Africa while at the same time remaining true to its mandate? We believe that the mandate of the Security Council is premised on the broader framework of the United Nations and not in isolation therefrom. This mandate includes maintaining peace and security through arrangements with regions and subregions, as specified in Chapter VIII of the Charter.

The international community, including the Security Council, has a contribution to make towards the now globally accepted need for an African renaissance. We would therefore like to focus attention on how the Security Council could broaden its engagement in Africa.

We firmly believe that in order to achieve this, it is necessary to define the context of such an engagement. In a historic action, the leaders of Africa have defined such a framework in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The aim is to address issues of peace and security while dealing with the roots of conflict.

The New Partnership for Africa's Development is a holistic, integrated, sustainable development initiative for the economic and social revival of Africa, involving a constructive partnership between Africa and the developed world. It is a pledge by African leaders, based on a common vision and a firm and shared conviction, that they have a pressing duty to eradicate poverty and to place their countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development and, at the same time, to participate actively in the world economy and body politic. NEPAD offers a historic opportunity for the developed countries of the world to enter into a genuine partnership with Africa, based on mutual interest and benefit, shared commitment and binding agreement, under African leadership. In proposing the partnership, Africa recognizes that it holds the key to its own development. The adoption of a development strategy, together with a detailed programme of action, marks the beginning of a new phase of partnership and cooperation between Africa and the developed world, including multilateral organizations.

To this end, we seek the Council's partnership in order to implement the following three elements of peace and security identified by NEPAD: the promotion of long-term conditions for development and security; building the capacity of African institutions for early warning; and enhancing African institutional capacity for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. Indeed, the institutionalization of the commitment to the core values of NEPAD has as its basis the promotion of peace, security, democracy, human rights and sound economic management.

Clearly, if the Security Council is to comprehensively address the problems we face on the African continent, it cannot rely solely on the tools provided in Chapters VI and VII of the United Nations Charter. The Security Council will forever be faced with issues that are beyond its mandate. My delegation would urge that the Security Council review its relationship with the Economic and Social Council. How these two main Councils of the United Nations work together will go a long way towards addressing some of the challenges that we face in Africa. In fact, in NEPAD, the African leaders go to great lengths to demonstrate that the problems of Africa cannot be resolved in isolation. This should be done through an integrated strategy that connects peace and security to poverty and underdevelopment — some of the key root causes of conflicts in Africa.

My delegation calls upon the Security Council and the United Nations to assist Africa to rebuild its capacity to manage all aspects of conflict by strengthening existing African regional and subregional institutions in the following key areas: the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts; peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace enforcement; post-conflict reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction; and combating the proliferation of small arms, light weapons and land mines.

Our aim is to contribute to this debate by drawing attention to both the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the soon to be launched African Union (AU). The AU structures will seek to entrench peace, stability, democracy, respect for human rights and justice; create conditions for economic growth and sustainable development; eradicate poverty; and entrench social progress and prosperity for all. These two initiatives hold the key to resolving the scourge of conflict in Africa and to setting the continent on a path towards sustainable development and economic growth.

The Government of South Africa has long expressed its commitment to promoting peace and security in our continent. Together with other African Governments, we seek to end the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Next month, South Africa will host the inter-Congolese dialogue, which we hope will finally bring peace to the troubled Great Lakes region. We have also come before the international community to promote a new partnership for Africa's development.

With this contribution to the debate, it is our hope that the Security Council will consider its role in matters where its mandate may be limited and require cooperation with other bodies of the United Nations. Our experience in Africa demonstrates that peace and development are mutually reinforcing. It is therefore our sincere hope that the debate today will launch a dialogue with the Security Council on how to comprehensively address the complex conflicts in Africa.

The President: I welcome to the Security Council the President of the Economic and Social Council, Mr. Ivan Šimonović, and give him the floor.

Mr. Šimonović: I would like to thank you, Sir, for your invitation and am pleased to participate in this meeting in my capacity as President of the Economic and Social Council.

In the light of the encouragement expressed in the Millennium Declaration for regular consultations and coordination among the principal organs of the United Nations in pursuit of their functions, I hope that this meeting will help lay the foundation for greater cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, as envisaged in the United Nations Charter.

The multidimensional nature of conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building demands a multidisciplinary approach tailored to the unique circumstances of each situation. The Security Council and the Economic and Social Council could work together more effectively within the purview of the mandates set for each body by the Charter. Mindful of the independence of the two Charter bodies, the aim would be to ensure that effective collaboration takes place between them so that all the United Nations

actors in the field may work in a complementary fashion.

In recent years, the Economic and Social Council on various occasions has devoted its attention to the issue of development in Africa, the most recent being the high-level segment of its substantive session in July 2001. A Ministerial Declaration was adopted which reiterated the support expressed at the Millennium Summit for the consolidation of democracy in Africa and assistance to Africans in their struggle for lasting peace, poverty eradication and sustainable development. The ministers also called on the United Nations system and the international community to support the New African Initiative adopted by the Organization of African Unity at its Lusaka summit, which is now the New Partnership for Africa's Development. Furthermore, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 55/217, this year the Economic and Social Council will consider the creation of an ad hoc advisory group on countries emerging from conflict.

I should like to express my appreciation for this opportunity and my intention to continue discussion with the members of the Economic and Social Council on ways to enhance the cooperation between the two Councils.

The President: There are still quite a number of speakers remaining on my list, but, in view of the hour and if Council members agree, I intend to suspend the meeting and to resume it at 3 p.m. sharp.

The meeting was suspended at 1.30 p.m.